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- Install a garage door opener

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The self-watering garden

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BATHROOM

17 *makeovers*
CLEVER TRICKS
TO ADD LUXURY



BEST
READERS'
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page 91

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MARCH ISSUE



109



36



page 64

page 44

page 54

page 104

page 124

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This issue

- 9 HANDY STUFF**
Give your house kerb appeal without breaking the bank
- 14 BUYER'S GUIDE**
Make your place easy to spot with stand-out numbers

Home

- 16 LUXURY DESIGN**
Create a haven around a bathtub
- 27 DREAM BATHROOM**
Plan the space for a perfect reno
- 31 UPDATE YOUR KITCHEN**
Revamp the hub of the home
- 34 SPACE SAVER**
Install a pull-out in the pantry

Decorate

- 36 TIMELESS STYLE**
Get beach-house decorating tips from an expert
- 44 FROM TRASH TO TREASURE**
Turn cast-offs and garage sale finds into fabulous furnishings

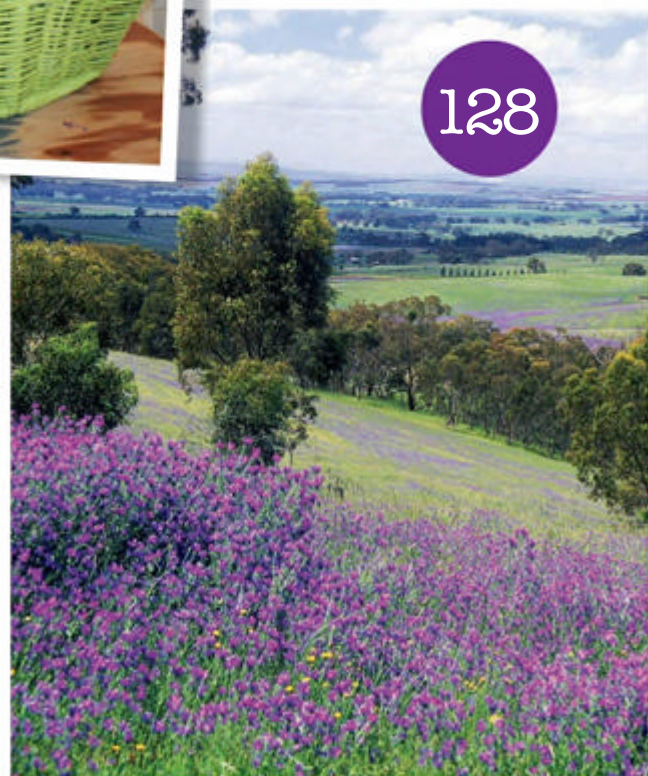


50

44



128



16



Renovate

50 DOOR DECISIONS

Choose the right external and internal doors to suit your decor

54 EASY DOORWAY MAKEOVER

Replace a door and jamb to give a room a great new look

60 CEILING REFRESH

Repaint this large surface and add downlights and fans

64 HOW TO PAINT A CEILING

Get a top-quality finish every time with tips from a pro

72 POWER UP

Automate the garage door so it's a breeze to open

78 CONQUER GARAGE CLUTTER

Add storage and workbenches to create a versatile workspace

Build

80 WALL OF BOOKS

Install French doors and shelves to open up a room and add storage

86 SUSPENSION SHELVES

Build sturdy shelving using pine and lengths of wire rope

91 READERS' PROJECTS

Take inspiration from the handiwork of these DIYers

Outdoor

104 TIMBER PLANTER

Make a self-watering raised bed

109 PREPARE BEDS FOR WINTER VEG

Sow seeds for a bumper crop

116 PLANT A HERB POT

Create a mini edible garden

Garden

118 THIS MONTH

Head into the garden to get it ready for autumn

122 FRAGRANT FAVOURITES

Plant sweet peas to enjoy their old-fashioned charm next spring

124 GROW ASIAN GREENS

Sow the seeds of leafy vegies now for a stir-fry garden in just weeks

128 WEED ATTACK

Keep a watch out for invaders so they don't destroy the backyard

134 DIY DESIGNER POTS

Decorate a pot plant with a stencil design and terracotta paint

136 5 EXTRAORDINARY USES FOR BANANAS

Use this fruit to feed plants, deter aphids and more



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3M



THIS ISSUE



PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

Stiff, squeaky doors are a thing of the past, thanks to a breakthrough in hinge technology from Zenith.

The new DURAsmooth range of hinges features a unique polyamide coating over the hinge pin to provide greater durability and smoother door operation.

Suitable for indoor and outdoor use, DURAsmooth hinges come in a wide variety of styles (itwproline.com.au/zenithdurasmooth).

EDITOR'S LETTER

Our clever cover this month features a bathroom door you can physically open!

It's amazing how interior doors can change the personality of the room.

In this issue, there's a buyer's guide to new interior doors, on page 50, plus how to replace a damaged or worn-out door, on page 54, and install a handle in three easy steps, on page 58.

Autumn is upon us

We're leaving the summer behind, so it's time to venture back into the veggie garden and get it ready for winter.

On page 109, we show you how to clear out beds, plus refresh and prepare the soil to sow seeds for winter crops. We even recommend suitable plants for your region.



FRANK AND GUN



Farewell Frank and Gun

This month, we're saying goodbye to Technical editor Frank Gardner and Technical subeditor Gun Arvidssen.

Frank has been at *Handyman* for 11 years, and the number of projects he's produced is phenomenal. His knowledge of everything from building to landscaping is second to none.

He is retiring to spend time with his lovely wife Janice. Luckily for us, he'll still be casting his keen eye over stories to ensure a continuation of the quality and accuracy of our projects.

Gun is going to work on other projects he has underway. He's been with us for five years and has created and subedited many projects with his incredible accuracy barometer in full focus. They've set the bar high for our team in future issues.

Happy DIYing,

MANAGING EDITOR
LEE DASHIELL



MORE INSPIRATION

Renovating the bathroom and need inspiration? Pinterest lets you create and organise boards of your favourite pictures. It's a great way to find and share ideas for your next DIY project.

Check out the *Handyman* boards at pinterest.com/diyhandyman or scan this code with your phone.



Pinterest



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AUSTRALIAN HANDYMAN MAGAZINE

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Published by Reader's Digest (Australia) Pty Ltd
(ABN 81000565471) 80 Bay St, Ultimo, NSW 2007
©2015 Reader's Digest (Australia) Pty Ltd
Prepress by Sinnott Bros
Unit 7, 108-120 Silverwater Road, Silverwater NSW 2128
Printed by Times Printers Pte Ltd,
16 Tuas Ave 5, Singapore 639340
Distributed by NDD Distribution Pty Ltd



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HANDY STUFF



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Light the way

Guide guests to your door with an exterior Brilliant Artemis 2W LED Stainless Steel Up/Down Light, \$60 (brilliantlighting.com.au). This durable cool white light can be positioned up or down and requires a licensed electrician to install it.



Mail it

Stand out in the street with the steel Aurora Centric Letterbox, \$250. It has a newspaper slot, can take envelopes up to A4 in size and is easy to install. northcotepottery.com



KERB APPEAL

Bring the outside of your home back to life without breaking the budget

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT



Update the exterior of your home with a few easy cosmetic touches.

Step up

Plan a pathway with WestStone 30-50cm Schist Waterworn Steppers, \$17 each, from Bunnings. With their neutral colour palette, they can be used for entertaining areas, paths, courtyards and stepping stones for a timeless, weather-worn look.



Slick it on

Brighten up the house with Dulux Roof & Trim Semi Gloss, \$199 for 10L. It resists dirt and stains, has UV protection, a 15-year guarantee and is available in popular Colorbond colours. dulux.com.au



~~SHOULDA~~

~~WOULDA~~

~~COULDA~~

DID



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Make it easy for guests to announce their arrival with quick additions to the entrance.

Ditch dirt

Forever cleaning your floor? Lay a Bayliss Patterned Coir Mat, \$11, by the door. Available in six colourful garden designs, the mat has a PVC backing and 15mm thick coir surface to scrape dirt off shoes. To clean, just shake or hose it down.

bayliss.com.au



Ding dong

For an old-fashioned feel to your entrance, install a Brassline Ship Bell, about \$25. Available in polished brass or bright chrome finishes, it comes with a mounting bracket. The solid brass construction ensures a true bell sound when rung.

delfarchitectural.com.au



Breeze along

Music lovers will enjoy the soothing sound created by the breeze running through this Gardman Natural Ring Bamboo Wind Chime, \$18 (brunnings.com.au). Individually hand-carved from bamboo with a cover made of coconut, the wind chime is 70cm high.



In chime

You'll never leave your guests out in the cold with the Arlec Portable Remote Control Door Chime, \$30. With no wiring required, it's easy to install and has two chime tones. It uses two C-sized batteries, which aren't included.

arlec.com.au



Boot scoot

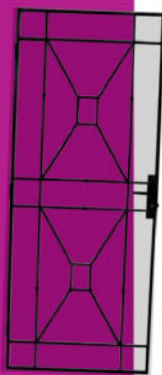
No more fussing over muddy shoes with the Bayliss Outdoor Boot Scraper Mat, \$20 (bayliss.com.au). A compact 30 x 34cm in size, it's specially designed to remove mud or other mess from the bottom and sides of a shoe in one motion. The tough coir bristles and galvanised wire construction make it durable and allow dirt to fall through so it's easy to clean by shaking or hosing.



Steel style

Bring the breeze inside and stay safe with the Bastion Sutton Screen Door, \$199. Measuring 2032 x 813mm, it is available in black or white with a steel frame and mesh.

bastiondoors.com.au



Swing through

Put the final touch to your new fence with Mr Pickets Arch Profile Cypress Pine Gate, \$78, from Bunnings. It's naturally termite-resistant, prefabricated and ready to install, all you have to do is attach hinges and a latch. Suitable for painting, clear-coat sealing or an oiled finish, it measures 1800 x 900 x 40mm.



In the zone

Fortify your home with a Corinthian Madison Veneer Unglazed Door, \$439. It's constructed for thermal efficiency and noise reduction, and the veneer has a 40 balance attack level (BAL) rating for homes in bushfire zones.

corinthian.com.au



A new door or fence can add style and security to your home.

Fence facelift

Bring an old fence back to life with Walpamur Exterior Fence Finish, \$55 for 10L (duluxgroup.com.au). Designed to be durable, the paint is also water-based, making fast work of the clean-up. It can be used on surfaces such as sawn timber, pine pickets and lattice.



Pick it right

Get creative with your fence edging using Cypress Windsor 900mm Fence Pickets, about \$2 each, from Bunnings.



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BUYER'S GUIDE

HOUSE NUMBERS

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Retro metro

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Budget beauty

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Steel it

Go for a sleek look with the Sandleford Segway Stainless Steel 100mm Numeral, \$17.



Modern marvel

Bring your home bang up to date with a Sandleford Ultra White Acrylic 90mm Numeral, \$7.



Classic copper

Upgrade your kerb appeal with a Buzon Lorenzo 200mm Copper Numeral, \$30.

Make it easy for visitors to spot your place by drawing attention to the entrance with eye-catching numerals

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT

Tasteful tones

Make the entrance elegant with a Sandleford Glass Black 140mm Numeral, \$21.



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Weather warrior

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Night bright

Stay visible with Sandleford Breeze Self Adhesive Yellow 60mm Numerals, \$2 each.



Back to black

Keep it simple with Sandleford Victoria Plastic Black 85mm Numerals, \$4 each.

Tall 'n' trim

Grab the attention of passersby with Sandleford Neo Stainless Steel Self Adhesive 160mm Numerals, \$11 each.



Luxury design

Create a bathroom sanctuary around a freestanding tub

WORDS DANIEL BUTKOVICH

Warm up a bathroom with pure white fixtures using timber surfaces.



The best time to add resort-style luxury to a bathroom is when planning a reno, and designing the space around a freestanding tub creates a relaxing sanctuary.

The aim is to create a serene space you can escape to at the end of a long day to indulge in a soak.

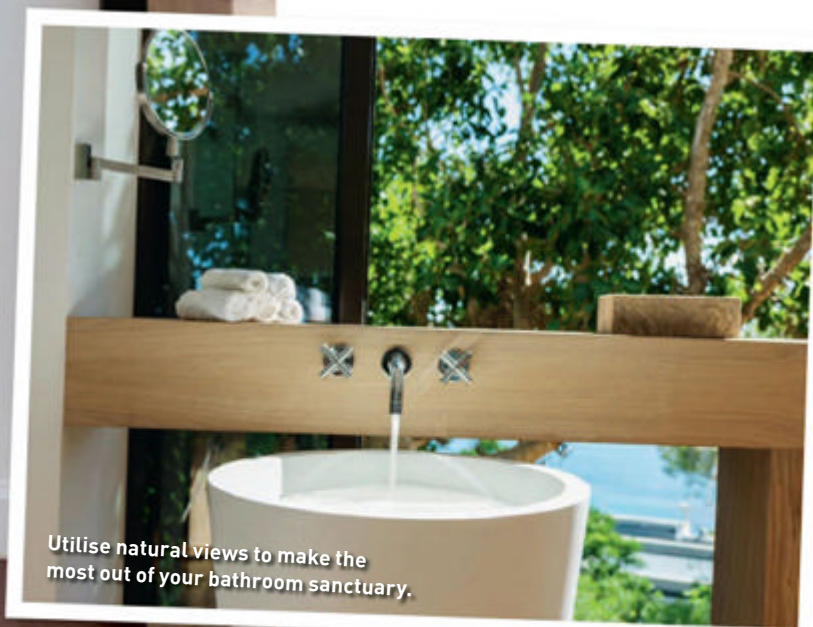
Freestanding bathtubs can be used as a centrepiece or positioned near a wall, where they will still catch the eye more than built-in baths.

Because they can dominate the bathroom visually, these types of tubs won't work in very small spaces.

Choose a shape and type of tub to suit the style of the bathroom from modern minimalist to country chic.

The fixtures, like the toilet and sink, should reinforce the look. Go for surfaces like timber, stone and glass.

Natural light and leafy views are essential components of a spa-like space, so add skylights, floor-to-ceiling windows and big mirrors. ➤



Utilise natural views to make the most out of your bathroom sanctuary.



Give a freestanding tub a dramatic black feature wall as a backdrop.

Monochrome marvels

White is commonly used in bathroom design as it makes a space appear clean and unblemished.

Contrasting white tiles and fixtures with black elements makes a statement that this is a modern and streamlined space.

Monochrome bathrooms have a timeless style and spa-like ambience.

A black-and-white scheme creates a clear canvas that allows the shapely lines of a bathtub to dominate.

Using black in a bathroom is a bold decorating choice, so the key is to not let it overpower the space.

Keep the walls, fixtures and floor tiles white, limiting black to a feature wall, the shower recess or cabinets.

When designing a monochrome bathroom, abundant lighting is a must to prevent the space looking cold and inhospitable.

If no natural light is available, use bright downlights above the vanity and softer feature lights for the tub. ➤



Black and white creates the look of a high-end hotel bathroom.

PICTURES ALAMY

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arc bath shower mixer



arc wall basin mixer*



arc overhead shower*



arc shower system*



arc towel rail



arc toilet roll holder



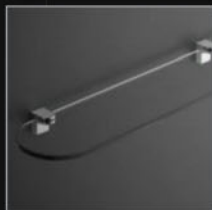
arc towel ring



arc robe hook



arc soap basket



arc glass shelf



arc basin mixer



*Available via special order.

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Wooden wonder

A new trend in bathrooms is the wet room, which combines the shower and bathroom into the same space. When utilised with an overhead rain shower, this gives a resort-like feel.

Depending on the space, costs may be lower as a shower enclosure won't need to be built, leaving more room in your budget for premium features like the timber wall panels and flooring used in this bathroom.

And while the entire area needs to be waterproofed, the main benefit of a wet room is that the space that would have been used for a shower recess can instead house a luxurious bathtub. >

This narrow wet room still manages to fit both a shower and bathtub.



PICTURESALAMY

Lifting the lid on choosing a toilet

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White walls, rich timber and natural finishes are country-look essentials.

Country charm

The rustic look works very well in bathrooms in older homes. Warm white walls are offset by timber and other natural finishes and materials.

To perfect the country look, install a traditional clawfoot bath with old-fashioned tap fittings in the centre of the room.

If you can't fit a freestanding tub, create a peaceful space around a bath surround using quaint accessories.

While white is the dominant colour for the walls, dark tiles can create a striking monochrome effect. Lay black and white tiles in a pattern to further reinforce the style.

Timber is ideal for benchtops, and door and window frames. Use other natural materials like wicker for storage baskets or a clothes hamper.

Keep a country-style bathroom bright and cheerful with framed artwork and photos. Flowers, candles and towels will add functional decorations to the room. ➤



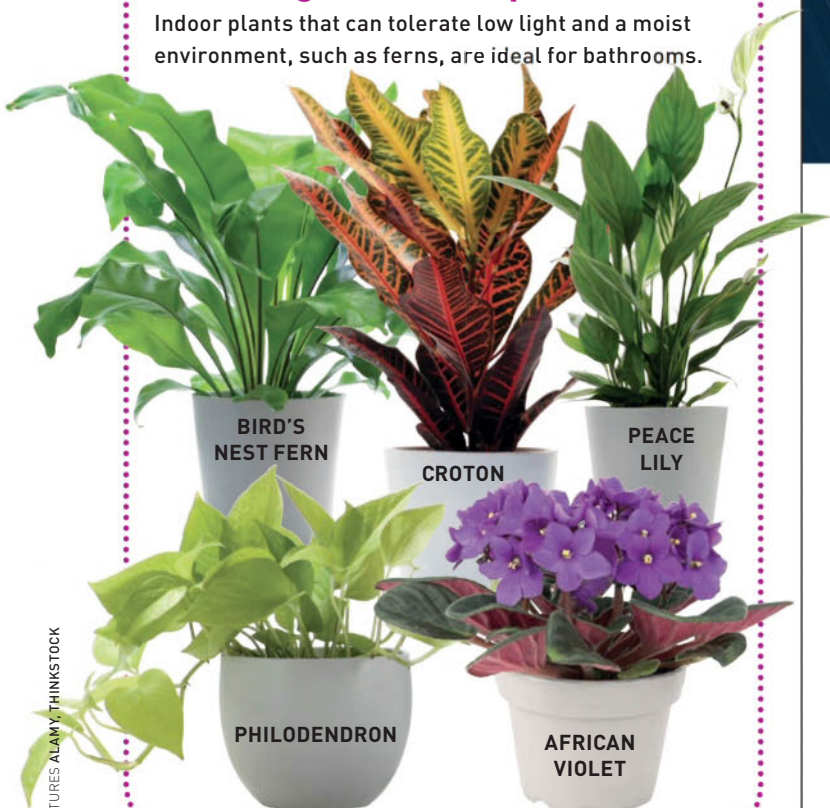
Exposed beams add a wonderfully rustic touch.



Soften the lines of a modern bathroom using indoor plants.

Choosing bathroom plants

Indoor plants that can tolerate low light and a moist environment, such as ferns, are ideal for bathrooms.

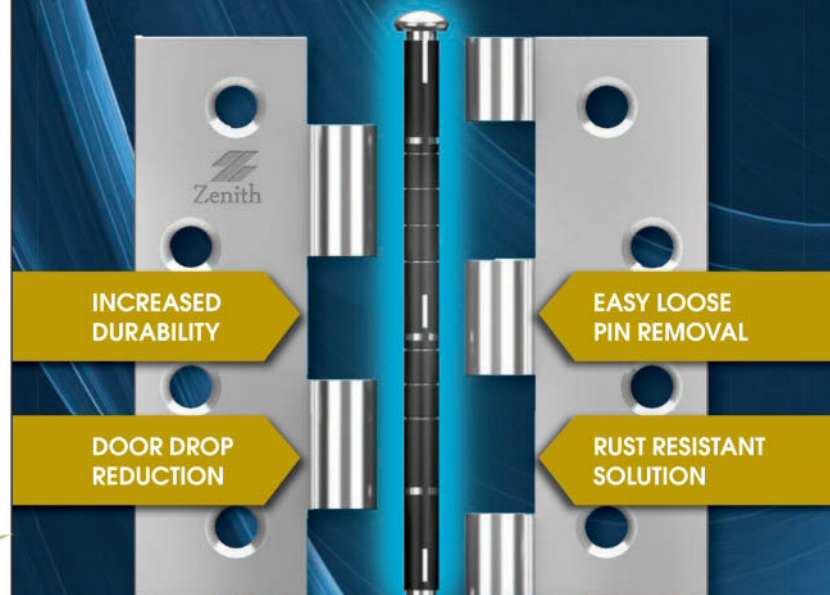


PICTURES ALAMY THINKSTOCK

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MAR 2020



Bring colour to a dark-tiled room using towels and accessories.

Accessories and storage

It's no use having a beautiful bathroom if it's always a mess, so any renovation must take your storage needs into account to keep the space tidy and organised.

A vanity cupboard with drawers or a medicine cabinet are the most common options, but there are lots of other solutions to bathroom storage.

Utilise vertical space by opting for a wall-hung vanity with shelves underneath. Line them with baskets for toiletries and towels, using bright colours for a modern look or natural fibres like wicker for a traditional feel.

Spare towels can also be folded or rolled and tucked into pigeon holes.

Trolleys on castors are a sleek solution for decorative items and have the added bonus of being portable.

For soap and toothbrushes, you can maintain the minimalist look by attaching metal holders to the wall with suction cups or adhesive.



Keep a busy bathroom tidy with plenty of storage.



Everloc Xpressions Dental Station, \$43. everloc.com.au



Naleon Adhesive Toilet Roll Holder, \$24. naleon.com.au

His vs hers dream bathrooms

Wouldn't it be nice to have a bathroom all to yourself? A UK online bathroom retailer has conducted research to discover just what men and women really want in a dream bathroom. The guys wanted gadgets, glass walls and neon lights, plus a sunken bath from which to watch the multimedia plasma TV. The girls were after a more classically styled and relaxing space with a freestanding bathtub and walk-through rain shower.



PICTURES AUSTRAL



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Open space and dual fixtures make a bathroom easier to use at peak hour.

Dream bathroom

Start your renovation with a solid plan to get the designer space you've always wanted

A great way to make a home more liveable and add value is to renovate the bathroom.

Designing it DIY makes your money go further, leaving extra room in the budget for luxury fixtures.

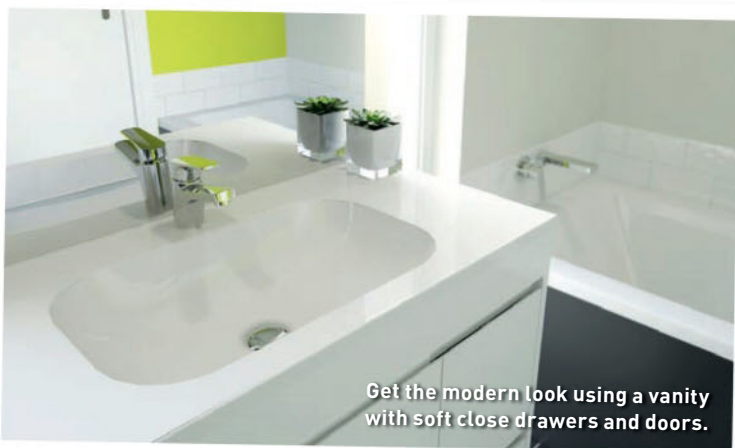
Take time to plan your renovation to avoid having to remodel again a few

years down the track. Decide what features you need and think about future lifestyle or family change.

Measure the space and design the bathroom on paper, experimenting with different layouts. Keep in mind that using existing plumbing will reduce overall renovation costs.

If space is an issue, prioritise the changes that make the biggest impact, both practically and visually, and think about storage and natural light.

Adding a bathtub can transform the room, but decide whether you'll actually use it, as the money and space can be used for other features. ➤



Get the modern look using a vanity with soft close drawers and doors.



Consider windows and natural light when designing the layout.



Contrast light-coloured tiles with dark timber finishes for a contemporary look.

Set your budget

Once you have a layout on paper, work out the cost of a full renovation compared to a cosmetic update and determine what you can afford.

If your bathroom has good bones, you can make an instant impact by replacing the vanity and fittings.

Figure out how much you can save with DIY and decide what you'll need a tradie for. Remember, all plumbing and electrical work must be done by a qualified professional.

Focus on quality

To get the most value and the biggest impact from your reno, choose the best quality products you can afford to get a designer look and maintain that wow factor for years to come.

Throughout the reno, take a step back and look at the project as a whole to make sure you're happy. Changes made early on will cost much less than once the renovation is complete.

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with clear Acrylic Tray 6584
(2 shelves pictured)

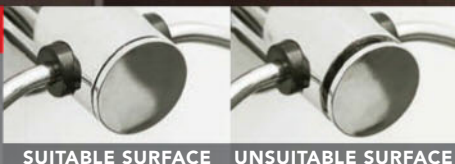
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Update your kitchen

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Ditching an outdated kitchen that's just not working for your family is as easy as replacing a tired, old benchtop or cabinets to bring it back to life.

Adding a kitchen island is a great idea, as it increases bench space, provides more storage options and creates a communal space.

Timeless elegance

Going with a neutral theme for pricey, fixed elements in a kitchen such as benchtops and cabinets gives you greater flexibility in style choices.

A neutral scheme makes it easy to create any type of look, from country to contemporary, and it won't scare off buyers if you ever want to sell. ➤



Kaboodle 600mm Three-drawer Base Cabinet Carcass, \$204.



Kaboodle Raisin Laminate Benchtop, \$266 per linear metre.



Alfresco living

Creating a home with a seamless transition between indoor and outdoor living spaces is an entertainer's dream, especially if you go one step further and also extend the kitchen.

If installed under shelter and protected from the elements, kitchen cabinetry can be used outside.

On a covered deck or verandah, partner frosted glass cabinet doors

with stainless steel, installing another sink in a large benchtop, and adding a bar fridge.

A great eco-friendly substitute for stained timber, bamboo benchtops can be used inside and out.

In the main kitchen, stacked slimline wall cabinets double storage space and have a minimalist aesthetic. Include lots of deep drawers with subtle handles in the base cabinetry.



Kaboodle 900mm Three-drawer Base Cabinet Carcass, \$258.



Kaboodle 50mm thick, 2400 x 600mm Bamboo Benchtop, \$550.



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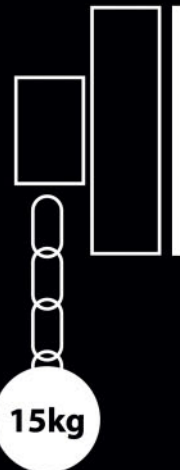


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SPACE SAVER

Maximise kitchen storage and improve access to narrow cabinets using a slide-out shelving solution

WORDS AND PICTURES DANIEL BUTKOVICH

Narrow kitchen cabinets limit the number of items that can be stored inside and can also be tricky to access.

Slide-out shelves and baskets are a great way to organise a deep cabinet, as they provide convenient storage for a range of groceries and allow them to be seen easily.

Choose the system

There are a range of pull-out solutions for different spaces such as corner cabinets or under the sink.

As this pantry was mostly used for storing cans and bottles, a sturdy three-tier pull-out with a 25kg capacity was mounted to the base of the cabinet for maximum strength.

Pull-outs are commonly attached to the door panel to transform the cabinet into a large drawer, but they can also be installed unattached.

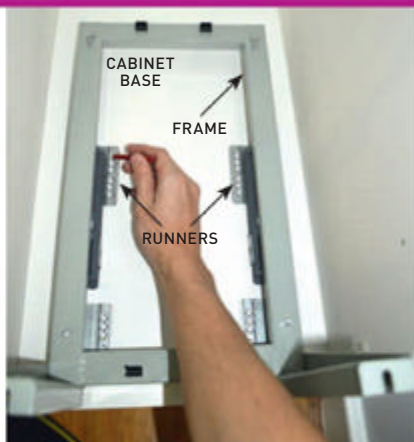
If securing to the door panel, measure the distance from the base to the frame, then mark this position on the door to determine the correct height.

Install the pull-out ▼



1 Remove the door

While supporting the cabinet door, loosen the screws holding the hinge to the cupboard, then remove the door and hinges. Also remove the hinges from the door panel if it is to be attached to the pull-out.



2 Mark the screw holes

Attach the runners to the frame and position the assembly inside the cabinet, ensuring it is in the closed position. Align the frame with the front of the cabinet and mark the screw holes on the cabinet base.

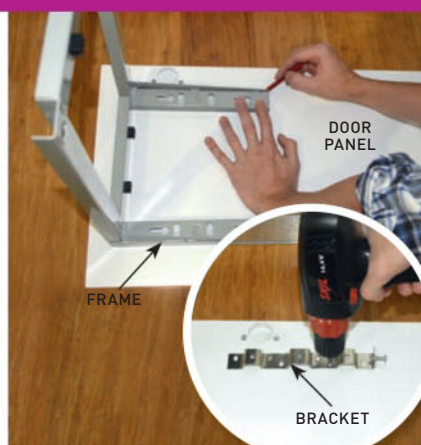


3 Drill pilot holes

Use a cordless drill to make pilot holes in the base of the cabinet. Secure the runners to the base of the cabinet using screws, then separate the frame from the runner and remove it from the cabinet.



REStored 300mm Three-tier
Chrome Pull-out, \$99.



4 Mark the frame location
Draw the outline of the frame on the back of the door panel, then position the bracket in the centre of the outline and mark the holes. Drill pilot holes and secure the bracket to the door panel with screws.



5 Attach the door panel
Fasten the bracket to the runners again, then secure the frame to the bracket loosely with screws. Check alignment by closing the cabinet and adjusting the alignment screws, then tighten the rest of the screws.



6 Insert the basket
Attach the basket to the plastic clips on the frame. Stock the pantry, ensuring the weight of the contents doesn't exceed the weight capacity. Adjust the cabinet door using the alignment screws, if necessary.



Timeless style

Create a beach-inspired home with these secrets to coastal decorating.

WORDS TIM NEVE PICTURES JOHAN PALSSON

Set the table for a tropical feast, taking inspiration from the organic forms of exotic fruits and berries. Here the food cloches and covers in semicircular textured shells mimic fruit husks.

Above the striking driftwood chandelier, the vaulted ceiling is painted all white to emphasise the airy nature of this outdoor room, with the balcony giving canopy views into the lush vista beyond.

Maximise the proportions of a lengthy dining table by creating a fabric table runner, here in a geometric green pattern, that cascades onto the floor at each end.

Notice how the inclusion of a rug softens this outdoor space, its simple striped hues harmonising perfectly with the setting, as well as the mix-and-match cushions.

As a fresh final touch, some cut tropical leaves on the table bring the island jungle into the home. ➤



This open-sided space is a wonderful example of blending interior and exterior architecture.



Create an organic space with green accents and timber that invites you to relax under the bright blue sky.

Open house

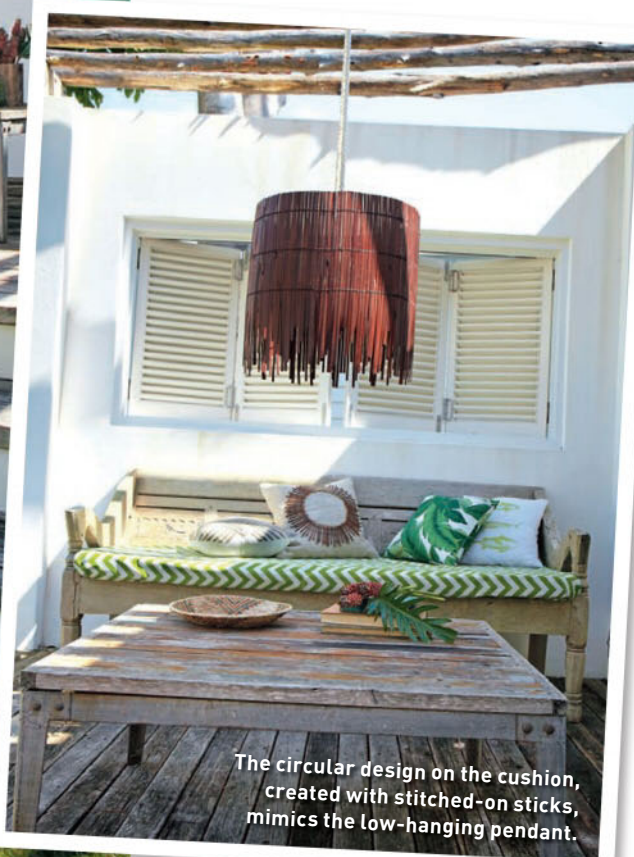
Step up onto this alfresco lounge area, where the wood decking has been left untreated to age gracefully from exposure to the elements.

Overhead, a canopy is created from lengths of tree trunk that produce delightful shadows over the space, depending on the time of day and angle of the sun.

An ornate day bed beckons you to take an afternoon snooze. The carved wooden frame is suggestive of Balinese artisan markets where you might find one-of-a-kind treasures.

A bold splash of green on the inside of one shutter door breaks up any formality in the architecture of this building. Shutters help control ventilation and light into the home.

Seek out homewares and furnishings with an organic influence. Here, a green chevron-stripe pattern and palm-leaf motif add to the feeling of a tropical oasis. ➤



The circular design on the cushion, created with stitched-on sticks, mimics the low-hanging pendant.

THE START...



Natural selection

Light woods mix effortlessly with tropical greens in the interior of this beautiful home.

A vintage German teaching chart demonstrates a variety of ferns and sets the leafy tone, while the collection of seashells emphasises the coastal connection.

On the chair, a classic striped ticking fabric in green, rather than the more usual blue or red, mixes with a lattice-print linen cushion and a tactile ikat throw with worn fringing.

All the green tones here, from lime green to bottle green, create a pleasant spectrum, balanced by the gentle wood hues and the vintage-paper tone of the hanging fern wall chart. ➤



Decorate a rustic timber sideboard simply with oversized shells and greenery under a glass cloche.

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Sliding louvre doors continue the appealing symmetry of the space and add to the impressive architecture.



Seek out vintage books with cover designs that suit the mood and colours of the room to use as accessories.

Island dreaming

This room just begs you to take an afternoon siesta, don't you think? The light wood tones and vivid yet soothing greens all add to the inviting feel.

A mosquito net over the bed creates a heavenly canopy, cascading onto a variety of soft linens.

The bed frame is impressive in scale, and the intricate carved wooden tile feature and whitewashed tone add to its hand-crafted appearance.

Just the inclusion of one cushion displaying a palm tree motif instantly transports the dreamy setting to a far-flung island. Taupe linens brought into the scheme balance the brighter colours.

A chandelier of wooden shards floats over the space, as if in homage to sea life. You could imagine it moving in the late afternoon coastal

breeze, bringing refreshing coolness to the balmy evening.

Sliding louvre doors are highly functional, creating privacy when closed, while allowing cooling sea breezes in through the panels.

A bamboo cloche is hung by knotted rope as a temporary bedside pendant.

The real purpose of such an item is to cover and protect delicate plant life, so it is ideal in this green-toned scheme.

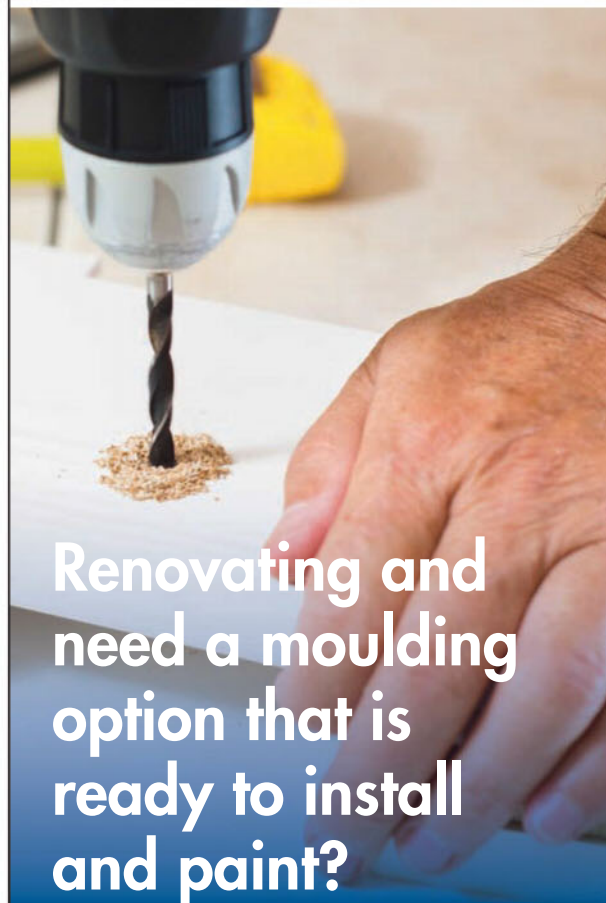


TIM NEVE



This is an edited extract from *Sandcastles: Interiors Inspired by the Coast* by Tim Neve (Murdoch Books, \$50).

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FROM TRASH TO TREASURE

Scour council clean-ups, garage sales and op-shops for hidden gems to upcycle

PROJECTS TRACY MARYON AND AMANDA SHAW

Far too much stuff is thrown away nowadays and takes up valuable space in landfill, so it makes sense to recycle what you can.

So before you cast off those items because they're looking a bit worse for wear, think again, as they can easily be given a new lease of life.

It'll save you money, too, because you won't have to replace them.

Need a new picnic hamper? Then get down that old wicker basket that's been gathering dust on the top of the kitchen cupboards and do it up.

Want a chair for the balcony? Dig out the tired-looking one that's been lying around in the garage forever.

Or consider checking out garage sales, markets, council clean-ups and op-shops for easy-to-revamp items.

This basket and folding chair were roadside finds. All it took to upcycle them was a quick wash and spray.

We used Rust-Oleum 2X Ultra Cover Paint + Primer in Key Lime for the basket and Lagoon for the chair.

TIP When you're spraying, work in a well-ventilated area or outside on a still day and put down drop sheets. ➤



Turn a plain basket into a dazzling picnic hamper.



WORDS AND PICTURES AMANDA SHAW, TRACY MARYON

Create a spot to sit and read by brightening up a roadside find.

Table rescue

This cane table was in a sorry state when it was salvaged from a heap of sodden furniture on a nature strip.

The paint had peeled off and it was covered with cracks and divots. The wicker around the legs was missing in places and the original top had been replaced with unsightly Perspex.

It almost looked beyond saving, but after a hose down, the damaged sections were filled and sanded, the missing wicker was replaced and the table was then primed and sprayed.

For a decorative finish, the top was covered with leftover wallpaper.

The cane magazine rack was a \$5 charity shop find and was simply sprayed the same colour as the table.



Zinsser Bulls Eye 1-2-3 Primer-Sealer Stain Killer, \$25 for 1L. rustoleum.com.au



The revived table and magazine rack make an eye-catching pair.



1 Prepare the table

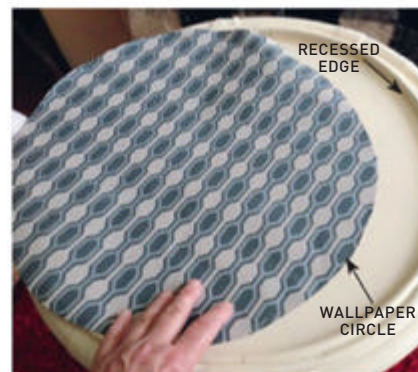
Wash the table with warm soapy water and let it dry. Repair any damage with timber filler and sand smooth all over with 180 grit abrasive paper. Remove the wicker wrapping from the base of the legs and use it to replace the missing wicker at the top by rewinding, then securing using a hot glue gun.



2 Apply the paint

Using a paintbrush, apply two coats of primer to ensure good coverage of the Perspex top and any damaged areas. Spray with two coats of paint, allowing it to dry completely in between coats.

TIP We used Rust-Oleum 2X Ultra Cover Paint + Primer in Ivory Silk.



3 Decorate the top

Measure the diameter of the top from the edge of the recessed section, then make a template. Cut a piece of wallpaper to size, lay it pattern-side down on a flat surface and put the template around it. Draw around it with a pencil, cut out the wallpaper circle and secure using wallpaper paste.



New vibrant cushion covers transform this wicker armchair into a showpiece.

Armchair refresh

When spraying wicker, it's worth investing in a spray gun because it's easier and quicker, plus you'll get a better finish.

And it's bound to be used again, as you're sure to catch the recycling bug.

This chair cost \$20 at a garage sale, and all it took to spruce it up was a hose down, a coat of primer and a topcoat.

We chose a creamy shade to complement the new cushion covers.

The foam inserts from the old cushions were used as templates. The fabric was measured and cut, then the pieces sewn together, leaving the backs open. The foam was inserted into the covers and the backs were stitched closed. ➤



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Travertine Stone



Black Marble



Natural Wood Plank



Mocha Parquet



White Marble

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Domestic Warranty

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WET AREAS

SELF STICK
For quick installment



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Painting with stripes

Salvaged during a council clean-up, a white plant stand showed the potential to be turned into a standout piece of furniture.

It was given a light sand all over with abrasive paper and painted in Taubmans Blossom.

Stripes on the tabletop were created by masking with tape at

even intervals. A copper metallic acrylic paint was applied to the unmasked sections and the rims to accentuate the decorative features.

To protect the surface, it was given a coat of water-based varnish.

Another roadside find, the chair was sanded and the back and legs primed, then painted white.

A white plant stand is given stripes and teamed with a painted wheel-backed chair.

Rack revamp

Spotted at an op-shop and bought for a couple of dollars, this veneer wine rack got a facelift and is now a fun and functional piece that would look great in any kitchen or living space.

You'll be ready to pop your bubbles when entertaining and it's guaranteed to be a great conversation starter.

There was slight damage to the rack, so the cracks were filled with timber filler, then lightly sanded, and any loose bits of veneer were glued back down. The rack was finished off with two coats of spray paint.

The rustic bedside table was found dumped by the side of the road and makes an ideal stand for the rack. It was simply sanded back to give it a distressed look.

Rust-Oleum 2X Ultra Cover Paint + Primer in Lagoon, \$11 for 340g.



A dull veneer wine rack becomes a fun talking piece.

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A photograph of a modern house with a large covered patio and a swimming pool. The scene is set at sunset, with a large palm tree in the background and a modern sofa on the patio. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds.

Door decisions

Make a great first impression with a unique entrance to your home

WORDS DANIEL BUTKOVICH

A designer door is an easy way to add character to a home, both inside and out. And with a vast range of styles, materials and hardware available, it's easy to find a door to complement your home.

Exterior doors need to be solid and durable to withstand rain, wind and heat, as well as provide security.

A front door is one of the most prominent features of a home, and a well-chosen one can set it apart from other houses on the street.

Keep it in sync with the rest of your decor, taking note of the age and style of the house. If you need inspiration, take a stroll through the local neighbourhood. >



This rich timber door stands out from its stone and glass surrounds.

Internal doors

An easy way to spruce up a room is to install a new door. The original internal ones can be quite ordinary, and replacing them with modern or classic doors can instantly improve the look of the house.

Timber doors provide an interesting texture that breaks up plain walls. They work equally well for old and new homes, with designs to suit any space.

Corinthian Doors has a large range of European-inspired internal and external doors (corinthian.com.au).



Modernise any space with the clean lines of the Deco range, from \$96.



Create visual interest with the Madison range, from \$182.



Add contemporary elegance with the Infusion range, from \$152.



The Slimline Cavity Frame, \$145, fits any Corinthian door and saves space.



Give a room a touch of European style with the Moda range, from \$218.



Repeat a timber inlay motif with the Infusion range, from \$155.

EASY DOORWAY MAKEOVER

Replace an old internal door and give the entrance to a room a bright new look

PROJECT JOHN BOWLER MAIN PICTURE STUART SCOTT

There are lots of reasons you may need to hang a new internal door at your place.

A major renovation can change the layout of a home while building an extension can add doorways, creating the need for new doors.

Replacing old or mismatched doors is also an easy and affordable way to instantly refresh interior spaces, particularly if you're painting walls or updating floors.

Hanging a new door, including the jamb and hardware, is a simple DIY project that can be completed in just one day. And doors can be purchased in kit form with a jamb that already has the hinge housings.

Jambs and doors can also be bought separately, offering a greater variety of sizes and styles.

If you're installing a new jamb as well as a door, you will need to check

the doorway studs for plumb, then measure the size of the opening to determine the door size.

For this project, we installed a 2040 x 820 x 35mm hollow-core door and separate 92 x 30mm jamb.

Hollow-core internal doors have additional blocking inside one edge, identified by a sticker that marks where the lockset should be installed. ➤



Zenith 100mm Fixed Pin Polished Chrome Butt Hinge, about \$7 for two. itwproline.com.au



A label shows where the lockset must be installed.

FASTENERS

TYPE	USE
Timber screws, 20mm x 8g	Hinges
Timber screws, 50mm x 8g	Jamb
Bullethead nails, 65 x 3.25mm	Jamb
Bullethead brads, 40 x 2mm	Architrave

TIME 1 DAY
SKILL INTERMEDIATE

DIY \$188

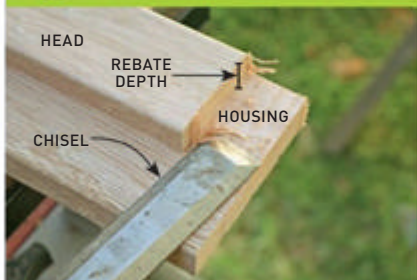
TOOLS DRILL, BRAD
NAILER, MITRESAW

Materials

Internal door	\$43
Single rebate jamb set	\$31
Colonial architrave	\$61
Hinges	\$3
Passage set	\$38
Screws	\$6
Bullethead nails	\$2
Brads	\$4
TOTAL	\$188

Spruce up the house after a paint job or add the finishing touch to a reno by hanging new internal doors.

Install a door and jamb



1 Make the jamb

Cut two stiles equal to the height of the door, plus 20mm clearance, and a head piece the width of the door, plus 46mm for two gaps and two stiles. Cut a housing to the rebate depth at each end of the head. Chisel out the waste.



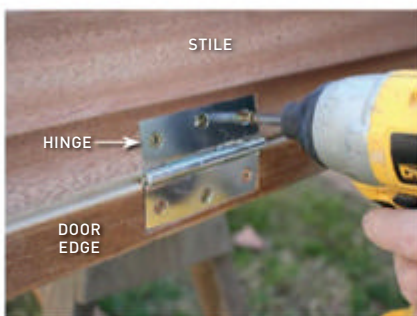
2 Set out the hinges

Mark hinge locations on the door, 200mm from the top and 250mm from the base. Transfer the locations to the stile, tracing around a hinge to mark each recess. Use a combination square to mark the depth of the recess.



3 Cut the hinge recesses

Mark the hinge recesses on the edge of the door 2mm narrower than on the jamb to stop the door from binding on the jamb. Use a sharp chisel to make relief cuts to the depth of each recess, then pare out the waste.



4 Attach the hinges

With the hinge in the door recess, drill a pilot hole towards the back of the hinge hole so the screw will pull the leaf tightly into the recess. Secure the hinge with a screw, check the clearance, then drive in the remaining screws.



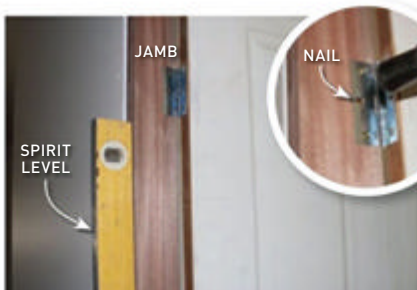
5 Assemble the jamb

On a pair of level sawhorses, assemble the jamb around the door and drill clearance holes through the head. Drill pilot holes into the stile ends and secure with screws, then check that the door opens smoothly.



6 Prepare the opening

Secure packers in the opening at the hinge locations, and equally spaced above and below, to correct for any studs that are out of plumb. Use a long spirit level to check for alignment and to ensure the top gap is consistent.



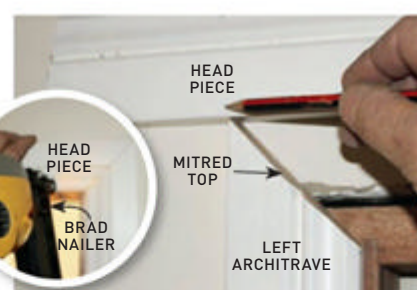
7 Secure the jamb

Position the jamb and align the hinge side with the wall cladding. Drive a single nail at the top packer, using a spirit level to plumb the jamb. Secure with nails through the packers, punching the heads below the surface.



8 Pack the lock side

Align the lock side of the jamb, using wedges to create a 3mm gap around the door. Attach the jamb with one nail, then close the door and check the gap. Move the wedges in or out to adjust, then secure the jamb with nails.



9 Add the architrave

Set the architrave 5mm back from the inside jamb face. Cut left and right architraves with mitred tops, securing with brads. Mark the head piece from the gap and cut to size, attaching with PVA adhesive and brads. ➤

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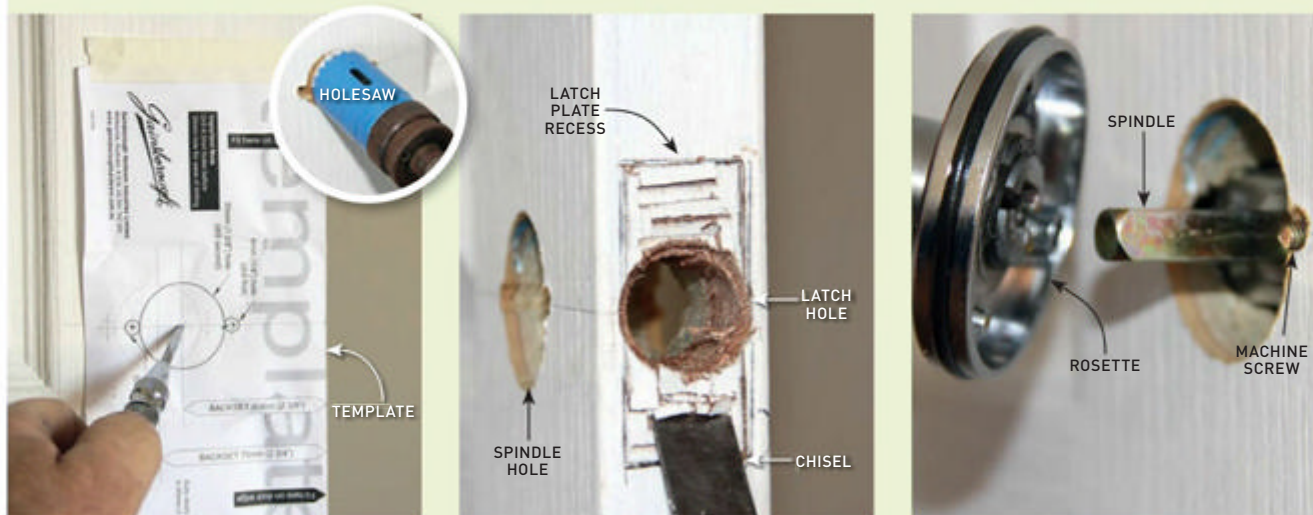


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Fit a door handle ▼

After installing a new door, you will need to fit a latch and handle, collectively called door furniture. Whether you choose a passage set, or a privacy set with a locking function, it will normally include instructions and a fitting template.



1 Drill the holes

Fold the template around the edge of the door to mark the hole locations. Use a spade bit to drill the 25mm latch hole, a twist bit for the 6mm rosette holes and a holesaw to bore the 35mm spindle hole.

2 Install the latch

Insert the latch and mark around the face plate, then chisel out a recess so it sits flush. Secure the latch, mark where it strikes the jamb and drill a corresponding 25mm hole. Chisel out a recess for the strike plate as before.

3 Attach the handle

Install the strike plate, then insert the spindle through the door. Put the handles on the spindle, attach the rosettes using machine screws, then tighten the grub screws in the handles. Replace the rosette covers.

Choosing door furniture



Gainsborough Trilock Omni, \$650.
gainsboroughhardware.com.au



Lockwood Velocity Spire Lever, \$35.
lockweb.com.au



Brassline Georgian Lever Lock, \$25.
delfarchitectural.com.au



Lemaar Braga Satin Chrome Privacy Set, \$40.
lemaar.com.au



Adoored Aluminium Canon Door Stop, \$10.
ehi.com.au



Irwin Door Lock Installation Kit, \$30.
irwin.com.au

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INTERIOR
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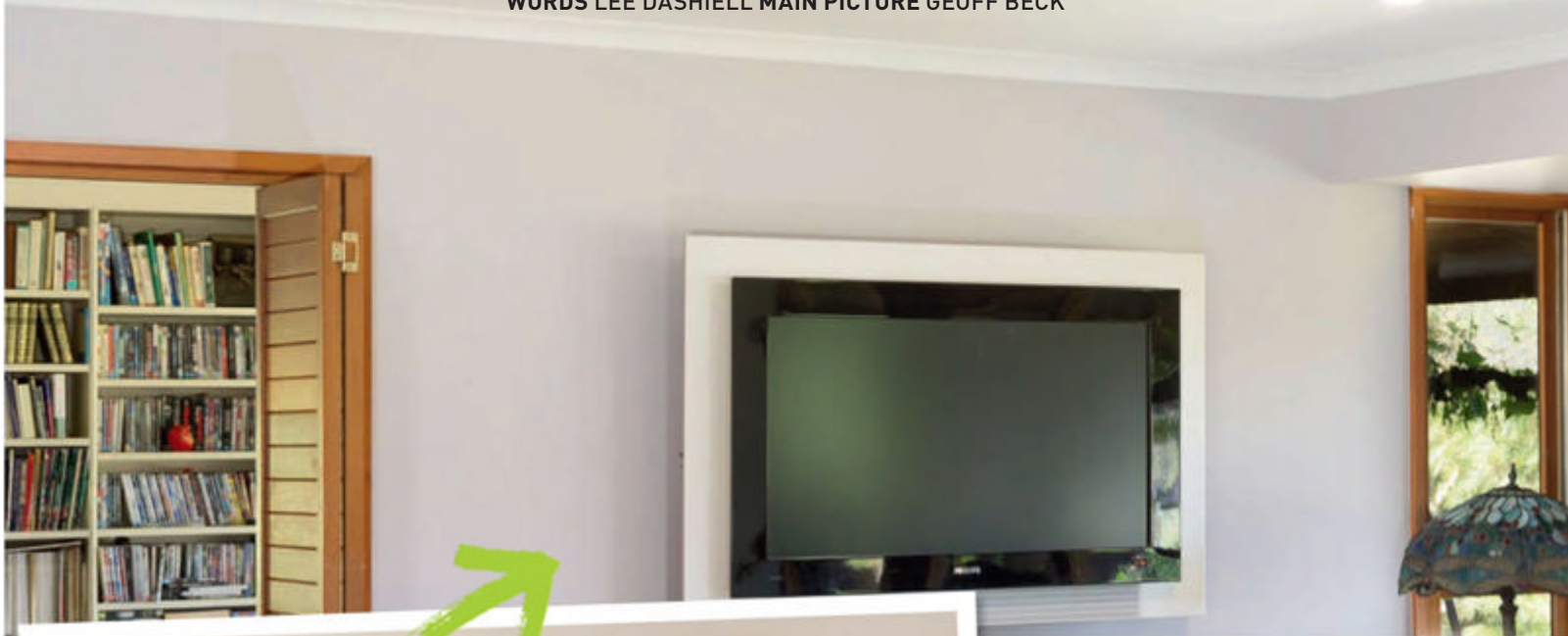
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Ceiling refresh

Spruce up the largest surface in the room by repainting and adding new downlights and fans

WORDS LEE DASHIELL MAIN PICTURE GEOFF BECK



Before



The ceiling in this 1980s house was showing its age and, during winter, a few of the glass panels around the fire in the living area were broken. This allowed smoke to escape and rise to the ceiling, which created sooty stains.

Halogen downlights were installed when the house was built and many weren't working. There was constant upkeep required replacing bulbs, not to mention ongoing costs.

Also, the ceiling in this living space was already fairly low and the timber and brass fans visually made it appear even lower.



After

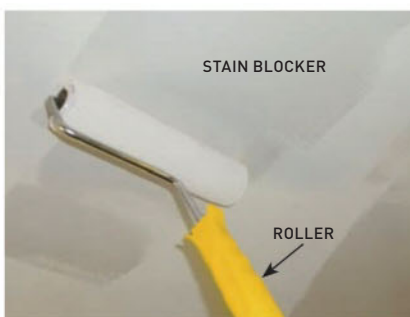
Stain-blocking paint and LED downlights were used to modernise this living space.



LONG-HANDLED BRUSH

1 Remove the stains

Scrub the smoke stains on the ceiling with a long-handled brush using white vinegar, then sugar soap, to cut the grease in the soot and remove the worst of the stains.



STAIN BLOCKER

ROLLER

2 Prepare the ceiling

Have an electrician remove the lights and fans, then repair any holes with plaster. Apply a coat of stain blocker with a roller to prevent residual stains leaching through to the topcoat.



LED DOWNLIGHT

3 Install new fittings

Apply 2-3 coats of good-quality ceiling paint over the stain blocker with a roller. Have an electrician install LED downlights and modern white ceiling fans to update the room. ➤

LED vs halogen lights

Electricity bills are one of the biggest household expenses, after the rent or mortgage. And surprisingly, lighting contributes to up to 30% of that bill.

There is a significant difference in energy consumption between different types of lighting. This is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh), with 1kWh being equal to a 1000W electrical appliance running for one hour.

LED bulbs have a power rating of 7-20W while halogen bulbs are rated anywhere from 35-500W. Halogens can use nine times the power to create the same amount of light.

In a house with 20 downlights, over five years, the electricity bill for halogens alone would be about \$3810 while LEDs would cost about \$705.

HALOGEN BULBS run electricity through a filament, which heats up and creates light. Ninety percent of the electricity used creates the heat while 10% creates light, making them less efficient than LED bulbs.

LED BULBS use small semiconductors rather than filaments to produce light. Eighty five percent of the energy is used to create light, so they stay cool and contribute less to household heat.

LIFE SPAN is also an important consideration, as halogen bulbs can last up to 2000 hours while LED bulbs have a life span of up to 50,000 hours. This means an LED bulb could last 25 times longer than a halogen one.



Halogens can use nine times more energy than LED bulbs to create the same light.

What you need

Restore a dingy ceiling by cleaning off stains, then painting it with stain blocker and ceiling paint. Replace any dated fans with new white models to create a sense of space and install energy-efficient LED downlights.



Dulux Preblock Stain Blocker, \$146 for 10L, and Light & Space Ceiling, \$148 for 10L. dulux.com.au



Arlec 140cm Aluminium High Velocity Three-blade Ceiling Fan, \$90. arlec.com.au



HPM 10W White LED Fixed Dimmable Downlight Kit, \$50. hpm.com.au

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HOW TO PAINT A CEILING

Get a professional finish when painting one of the trickiest surfaces in a home

They're usually much larger than a single wall and are often illuminated with raking light that accentuates even the smallest flaws, which means ceilings present some unique painting challenges.

Add to that the difficult task of working overhead and things can get messy in a hurry, so we've grilled a pro to help you get the best result.

Bill Nunn is the owner of William Nunn Painting, which specialises in painting older houses.

We've called on his 35 years of experience in the business to find out the best ways to paint a ceiling, so you get a top-quality finish every time. ➤

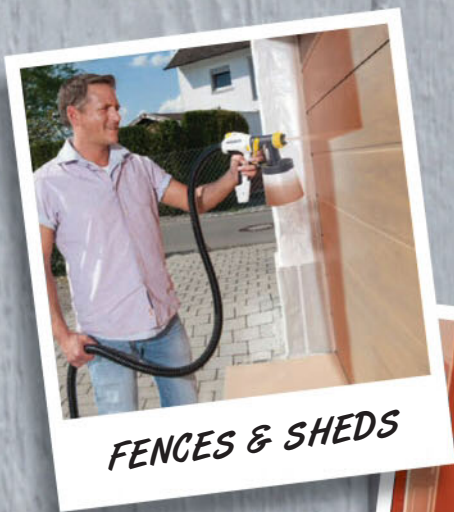


BILL NUNN



PICTURE (MAIN) THINKSTOCK

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1

Use a good primer

Roof leaks, overflowing sinks and tobacco smoke can all leave ugly stains that are hard to conceal with regular ceiling paint.

Apply stain-blocking primer to cover any stubborn ceiling marks. Try Zinsser Smart Prime, which is formulated for this purpose and water-based for easy application.

Zinsser Smart Prime, \$84 for 3.75L. rustoleum.com.au



2

Sand before painting

Over time, and as the layers of paint build up, lumps and bugs can get stuck to the ceiling.

On ceilings that aren't textured, start with a quick once-over, sanding with 100 grit abrasive paper. This helps ensure a perfectly smooth paint job and also increases paint bonding.

Use a sanding pole to make working easier, then wipe the ceiling afterwards with a damp sponge to remove the dust.



3

Cut in and then roll

Use a paintbrush to cut in at the edges of square-set ceilings. Doing this before you roll means the majority of the brush marks will be covered with the roller.

Carefully brush paint along the edge of the ceiling in 3m sections, then roll that section. This keeps the cut-in section wet until you roll, which allows the paint to blend in better.

Bill says it's also less boring to alternate between cutting in and rolling, making the task of painting a whole ceiling less tedious. >



4 Roll in all directions

There are a few tricks to getting a smooth and consistent coat when applying paint to the ceiling.

Work in square sections about 2 x 2m, moving quickly from one section to the next to make sure the paint along the edge doesn't dry before you roll the next section.

Keeping a wet edge is the key to minimising overlap marks.

Bill also says you'll get the best coverage by immediately re-rolling each section at a right angle to your first roller direction as you go.

5 Purchase ceiling paint

As a general rule, you will achieve the best result by using paint that's specially formulated for ceiling application.

You need paint that doesn't spatter, dries slowly and is flat rather than glossy. Premium ceiling paints have added pigments to make the ceiling look brighter.

They can also be tinted if you don't want to stick to a white ceiling.



British Paints White Ceiling Paint, \$36 for 4L. britishpaints.com.au



6 Overlap the edges onto the walls

If you also plan on painting the walls, overlap the paint onto them a little bit when cutting in. Then when you paint the walls, you will cover the overlap as you cut in to the ceiling at the top of the walls.

Some painters like to skip the overlapping and cutting-in steps and save time by mashing the roller into the corners instead.

Bill doesn't recommend this method as it's sloppy, builds up excess paint in the corners and can leave runs or a thick paint line on the wall. ➤

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7 Experiment with colour

While you may not want to paint your ceiling yellow, don't be afraid to deviate from a plain white surface.

Bill points out that painting the ceiling in a colour can make a small room seem bigger, or a room with a high ceiling appear cosier.

TIP For help with ceiling and wall colour choice, search online for examples of rooms you like.



8 Opt for simple accessories

When it comes to painting equipment, Bill prefers low-tech solutions.

You can buy extendable paint poles, but he suggests using simple timber broom handles with a thread because they are light, inexpensive and will get the job done.

9 Use a thick roller cover

Lambswool covers are the key to a good finish, and while more expensive, they're easy to clean and can be re-used.

They are ideal for getting as much paint on the ceiling as possible in a short amount of time while minimising spatters.



LAMBSWOOL
ROLLER



SYNTHETIC
ROLLER



10 Go gently on textured ceilings

Painting a textured ceiling is tricky. If it has never been painted, the water in the paint can loosen the texture and cause it to fall off. Ceilings that have been painted are probably safe.

Try rolling paint onto a small section first and if the texture becomes

loose, painting the ceiling is risky and the necessary repairs will need to be carried out before painting.

Bill says the best tip for rolling on paint is to avoid overworking it. If the ceiling needs a second coat, wait for the first one to dry completely, then roll another perpendicular to the first.

TIP If possible, spray on the paint, as it's less likely to loosen the texture.

WHEN LESS



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POWER UP

Add an automatic door opener to take the grunt out of accessing the garage

WORDS FRANK GARDNER

Tired of getting in and out of the car just to open and close the roller door on the garage, especially on rainy days?

There is an inexpensive solution if you are prepared to DIY install an electronic roller door opener.

Chamberlain roller door openers cost just a few hundred dollars from the hardware store and can be installed by one or two people in as little as two hours using just a few standard tools.

Each door opener kit comes with an instruction manual, which should be read thoroughly before proceeding with the installation.

You'll also need to check the measurements of the garage door, as the maximum allowable height is 4.5 metres, with a maximum door area of 16 square metres.

The door must also be spring balanced and the axle diameter no more than 35mm.

Check all requirements carefully before purchasing an automatic door opener. ➤



Chamberlain HandyLift Deluxe Rolling Garage Door Opener, \$347.
chamberlaindiy.com.au

Adding a weight bar

If the garage roller door has a base handle, remove it and attach the weight bar using the handle holes.

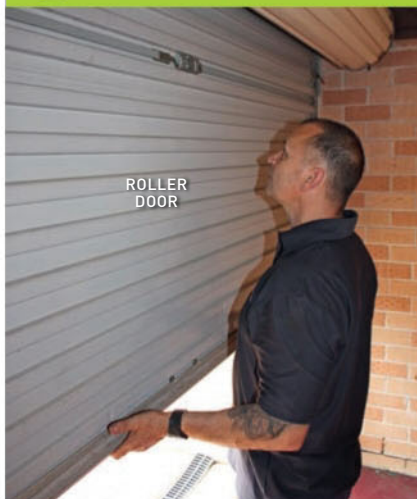
Or, if there is no handle, centre the weight bar to mark and drill two 5.5mm holes. Position the bar on the roller door and secure with the supplied bolts, washers and nuts.





For fast, easy garage access, add an electronic opener to a roller door.

Install a rolling door opener



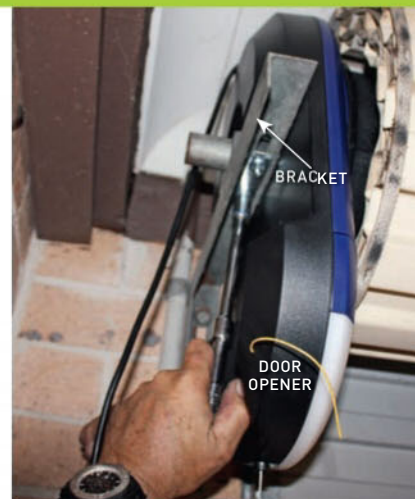
1 Test the door

Check the door to ensure it is well balanced, and not sticking or binding, by disabling all locks. Lift the door to halfway and move it up and down a few times. The door should remain spring balanced. If it doesn't hold or binds anywhere, call a qualified door technician to make adjustments.



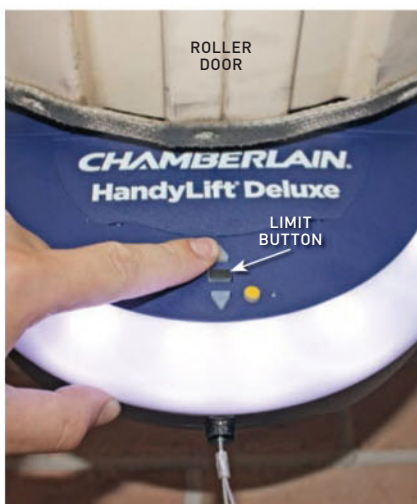
2 Fit the stop collar

Install the stop collar on the shaft of the roller mechanism on the end opposite to where the door opener will be attached. Fit the stop collar hard against the boss of the door drum, tighten with a socket and check that the U-bolt holding the door shaft to the bracket is secure and tight.



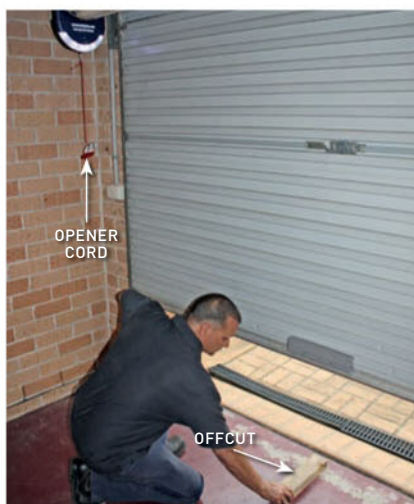
3 Install the opener

Take the rope through the release handle and manual release cable. Open the door fully and tie it up, supporting the weight on a ladder. Remove the U-bolt and wall bracket. Slide the opener over the door shaft, engaging the drive legs in the drum wheel, and clamp. Refit the U-bolt and bracket.



4 Program the settings

Untie the door, then raise and lower by hand to check the operation in manual mode. Plug in the opener and turn it on, then use the buttons to program it for right- or left-hand operation, open and close limits, and force settings. Cycle the door up and down so the force is set and learned.



5 Test the safety reverse

Position a 40mm thick timber offcut flat on the floor and lower the door. If the door stops on the offcut, reprogram the limit settings and repeat the test. When the door reverses off the timber offcut, remove it and run the door opener through a full cycle.



What you need

To DIY install a Chamberlain electronic door opener all you need are basic hand tools.

TIP Make sure a powerpoint is located near the garage door.

- Ladder
- Adjustable wrench
- Socket wrench with 8, 10 and 13mm extended sockets
- 300mm socket extension bar
- Phillips head screwdriver
- Tape measure
- Spirit level >

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For more information visit
chamberlaindiy.com.au



You won't park outside the garage after you install a door opener.

Sectional door

Before automating a sectional garage door, it's important to do research to ensure the opener matches the door.

A Chamberlain sectional door opener suits doors less than 16 square metres in size with a curved track and maximum door height of 2.2 metres.

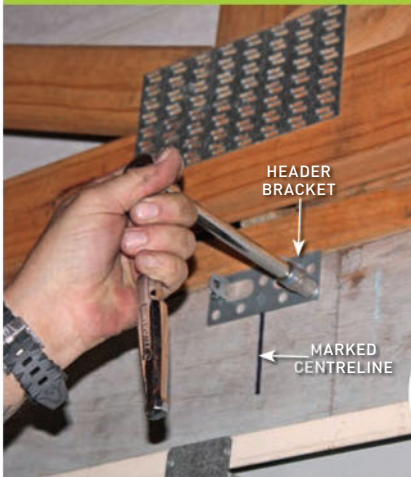
The opener must be securely suspended, so check out the wall and roof above the garage door.

Sufficient structural supports need to be in place and if you have a ceiling, extra support brackets and fastenings may be required.

If you don't have an additional access door to the garage, you'll need a quick-release accessory to allow manual entry in case of power failures or breakdown.

Before installation, lift the door halfway, then release it. It should stay in place if it's balanced and supported by its springs. Raise and lower the door to check for binding, and call a technician to adjust it if necessary.

Install a sectional door opener ▼



1 Install the header bracket
Close the door and mark the vertical centreline of the door on the wall or ceiling above it. Fully open the door and draw an intersecting horizontal line at least 50mm above the high point of the door. Centre the header bracket on the horizontal line and secure with the supplied screws.



2 Assemble the rail
Separate the rail ends and add the centre pieces, sliding the rail connectors over the joins. Adjust the nut on the pulley assembly to tension the belt. Slide the rail bracket onto the power head and secure with brackets. Position the rail bracket against the header bracket and pin together.



3 Secure the brackets
Prop the opener in position and open the door, centre the rail over the door and position a 50mm spacer in between. Bend the hanging brackets and secure to both the ceiling and rail brackets. Add a centre rail bracket in the mid position of the rail, securing to the ceiling with hanging straps.

You'll need a 240V powerpoint located close by to plug in the opener. If not, call an electrician to install a new one, don't run an extension cord.

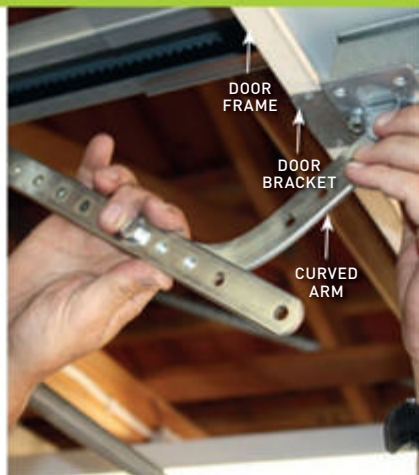
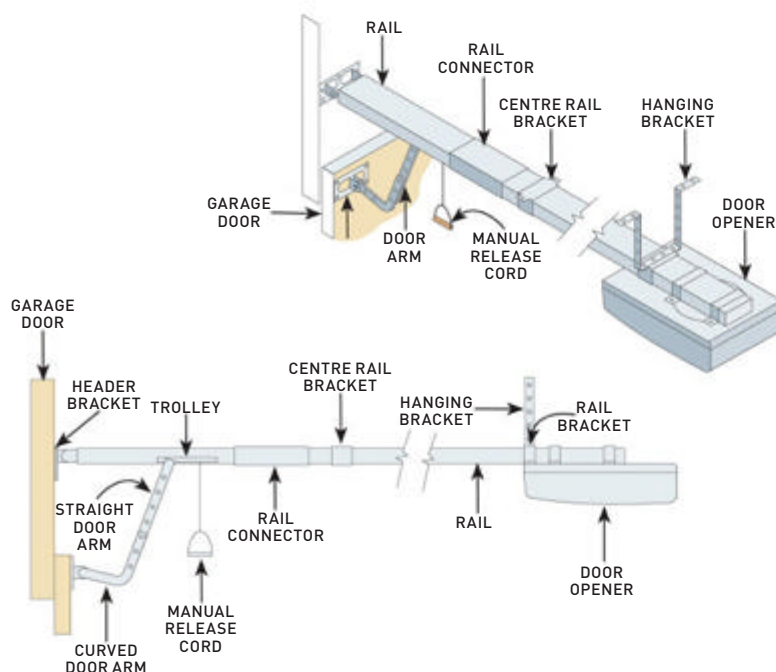


Chamberlain Powerlift Plus
Sectional Garage Door Opener, \$347.
chamberlaindiy.com.au

Cyclone-proofing

New homes in cyclone areas are required by the building code to have wind-resistant garage doors. You can't power them up DIY, but you can have an opener like the Merlin CyclonePro professionally installed. gomerlin.com.au

Door opener



4 Attach the door arm
Secure the door bracket to the frame of the door, then pull the manual release cord to disengage the trolley. Slide the trolley 300mm from the header bracket, then install the curved arm onto the door bracket and connect with two bolts to the straight arm at a 20° angle.



5 Program the settings
Plug in the opener and turn it on. Open the rear access panel to set the travel limits of the door using the program and arrow buttons. Run the door through an up and down cycle and use the buttons to set the force. If the door won't open or shut properly, check it isn't binding or sticking.



6 Test the safety reverse
Position a 40mm thick timber offcut flat on the floor and lower the door. If the door stops on the offcut, reprogram the settings and repeat the test. When the door reverses off it, remove the timber offcut and run the door opener through a full cycle.



Find it at Bunnings

Conquer garage clutter

Convert a small garage into a compact, functional workspace and storage area



The average garage houses more than just the car and a lot of the time it's too full of other items to be used for parking.

Whether it's a home for power tools, gardening equipment, outdoor gear or leftover parts from past DIY jobs, it doesn't take long for the garage to end up a jumbled mess.

Clean and compact

To clear clutter and make accessing tools easy in a busy garage, choose and install a storage system.

If you're low on space and need functional work and storage areas, make the most of the walls. Go for the four key solutions and add a shelving unit, hooks, workbench and lockable cabinet.

Safe and secure

Whether you have kids or security concerns, selecting lockable drawers and cupboards allows tools and chemicals to be stored safely.

If combined with wall-mounted shelves and cabinets, and other adaptable components, you can create a garage that is organised with expensive or dangerous items kept secure and out of reach.

Store smaller, frequently used items in the drawers and low shelves, adding plastic tubs on high shelves for little-used equipment.

A pegboard is a handy way to use vertical space to keep hand tools within reach of your workbench.



Romak Two-door Steel Mobile Garage Cabinet, \$199.



Romak Four-piece Pegboard Garage Storage System, \$179.



Romak Single Door Wall-mounted Garage Cabinet, \$99.



Qiq Fix 1800mm MDF Garage Work Bench, \$269.



Romak Garage Total Storage System Package, \$1045.*

Qiq Fix Six-tier MDF Shelving, \$149.

Compact storage solutions help make the most of small spaces.

* PACKAGE INCLUDES WALL CABINET, PEGBOARD, TWO CABINETS AND WORKBENCH. ACCESSORIES NOT INCLUDED

WALL OF BOOKS

Transform an outdated space with French doors flanked by shelves

PROJECT DAVID RYAN WORDS FRANK GARDNER MAIN PICTURE GEOFF BECK

The best home layouts use space efficiently and provide plenty of storage. In this home, an unused fireplace and a 1970s-style timber panelled wall made the room look dated.

It was opened up by cutting a hole in the wall to install French doors, allowing natural light to enter the room and giving access to the garden.

Floor-to-ceiling shelves were then installed on either side of the doors to display books and ornaments, and provide storage for CDs and DVDs.

An overhead shelf completes the installation and gives the French doors a sense of depth with the bookcases painted to match.

The bookcases are built from MDF and trimmed with ribbed edging, from Porta Mouldings (porta.com.au).

The measurements are easily adapted to suit the dimensions of any space around a door, as the simple design consists of two bookcases with an extra shelf mounted overhead.

The sides of the bookcase boxes are two layers of 18mm thick MDF, with

the overhead shelf supported between them on the doorway cover panels.

To ensure stability, secure the bookcases to the wall studs. Mark the stud positions on the walls, then transfer the locations to the bookcase battens. Drive screws through the top and centre battens into the wall studs.

Cut the parts using a circular saw and straightedge guide or have them cut by the supplier for a small fee.

Secure the shelf

Once the bookcases are built and secured in position, cut the overhead shelf to fit between them, supported on the shorter cover panels.

Secure the shelf with screws driven from inside the bookcases, then attach the overhead shelf sides using adhesive and screws.

To finish, give the bookcases a built-in look by cladding the baseboards with skirting.

Cover the gaps between the bookcases and the ceiling using the same profile of moulding, mitring the corners to fit. ➤



Materials	
MDF	\$209
Pine	\$15
Ribbed trim	\$34
Panel moulding	\$17
Meranti colonial trim	\$67
Quad trim	\$4
Shelf pins	\$52
Primer	\$63
Gloss acrylic	\$81
Particleboard screws	\$47
PVA adhesive	\$6
TOTAL	\$595

PICTURE (INSET) GEOFF BECK



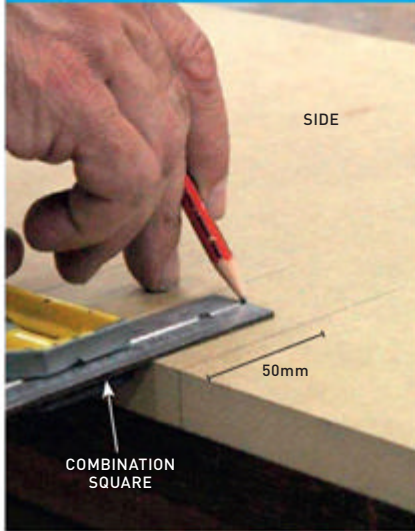
After

Installing French doors brightens the living space while shelves provide much-needed storage.



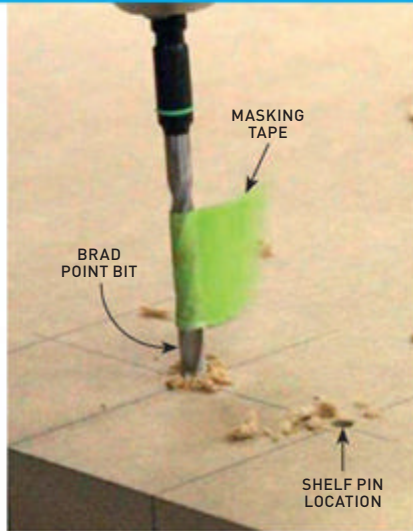
Before

▼ Build the bookcases



1 Mark the shelf positions

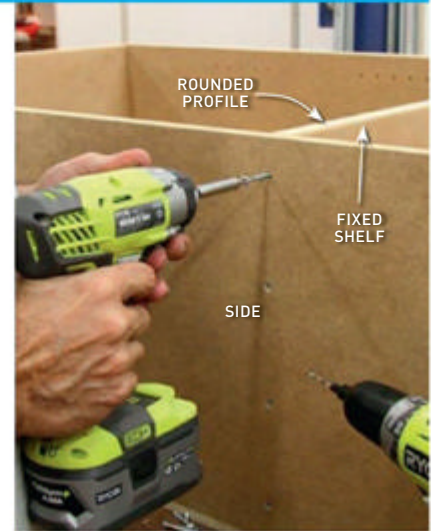
Position two sides face to face with all edges flush. Mark the shelf hole heights across the front edges, then square the lines across the inside faces. Set a combination square to 50mm and use it to mark the shelf pin centres, then repeat for the mullions.



2 Drill the shelf pin holes

Use a 5mm brad point bit to drill 10mm deep shelf pin holes at the intersections of the marked lines, using a depth collar or masking tape on the bit to ensure accuracy.

TIP Drill the shelf pin holes the whole way through the mullions.



3 Assemble the bookcases

Create a rounded profile on the front edges of the shelves using a router with a 6mm roundover bit. Position the top, base and fixed shelves between the sides, securing with interior PVA adhesive and screws through the pilot holes.



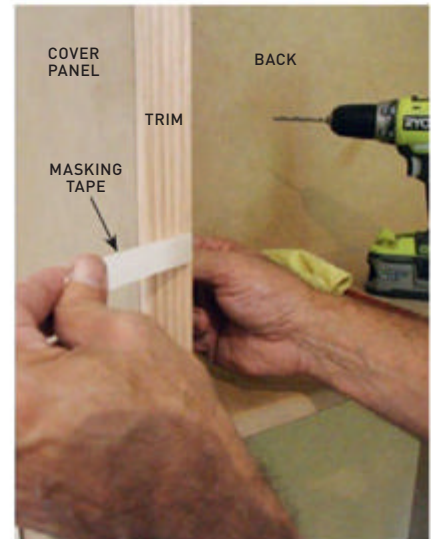
4 Secure the baseboards

Use adhesive and screws to secure the baseboards flush with the front edge of the bookcase base. Position the mullions between the bookcase base and fixed shelf and the bookcase top and fixed shelf, securing with adhesive and screws.



5 Attach the back

Secure the battens using screws, then attach the cover panels with screws driven from inside. Turn over the bookcases and use screws to attach the back panels to the top, sides, fixed shelves and mullions, working down one side, then across the top.

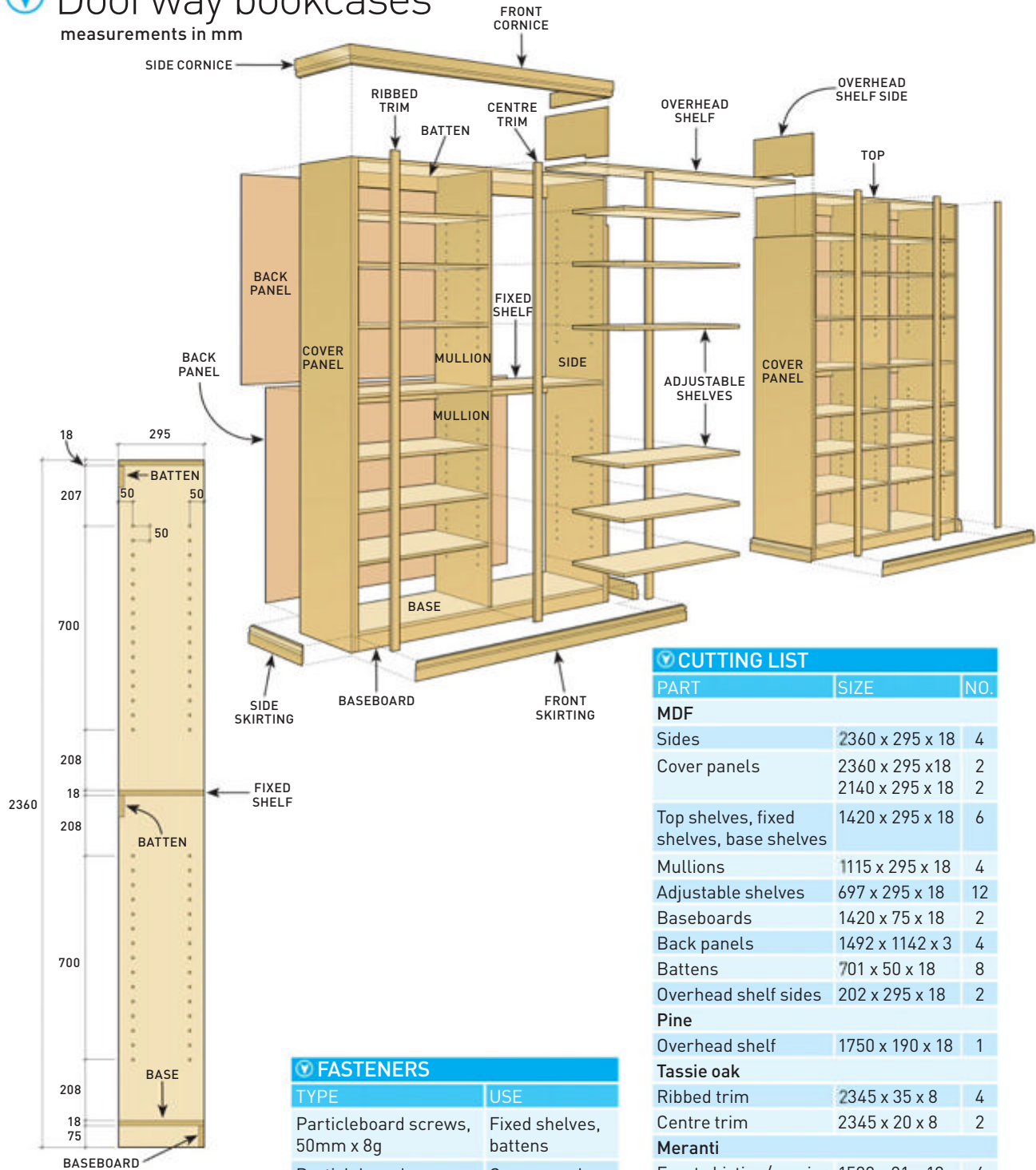


6 Add the trim

With the bookcases in position, drill pilot holes through the battens to secure them to the studs. Use adhesive to secure the skirting and cornice. Cut the trim to fit, apply PVA to the front edges of the sides and mullions, then tape the trim in position until dry. ➤

Doorway bookcases

measurements in mm



CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
MDF		
Sides	2360 x 295 x 18	4
Cover panels	2360 x 295 x 18	2
	2140 x 295 x 18	2
Top shelves, fixed shelves, base shelves	1420 x 295 x 18	6
Mullions	1115 x 295 x 18	4
Adjustable shelves	697 x 295 x 18	12
Baseboards	1420 x 75 x 18	2
Back panels	1492 x 1142 x 3	4
Battens	701 x 50 x 18	8
Overhead shelf sides	202 x 295 x 18	2
Pine		
Overhead shelf	1750 x 190 x 18	1
Tassie oak		
Ribbed trim	2345 x 35 x 8	4
Centre trim	2345 x 20 x 8	2
Meranti		
Front skirting/cornice	1528 x 91 x 18	4
Side skirting/cornice	313 x 91 x 18	8
Front ceiling quads	1564 x 18 x 18	2
Side ceiling quads	331 x 18 x 18	4

FASTENERS

TYPE	USE
Particleboard screws, 50mm x 8g	Fixed shelves, battens
Particleboard screws, 25mm x 8g	Cover panels, back panels
Particleboard screws, 65mm x 8g	Battens

Build durable furniture

For projects such as bookcases to look great and stand the test of time, it's crucial to cut the materials accurately and assemble the pieces using strong joints and appropriate fasteners.

To cut sheet materials accurately and reliably with a circular saw, use the factory edge of an 18mm sheet of MDF as a cutting guide.

Cut a strip about 150mm wide and measure the offset distance from the inside edge of the circular saw base plate to the outer face of the blade.

Clamp the MDF strip this distance away from the cut line and run the circular saw along the factory edge.

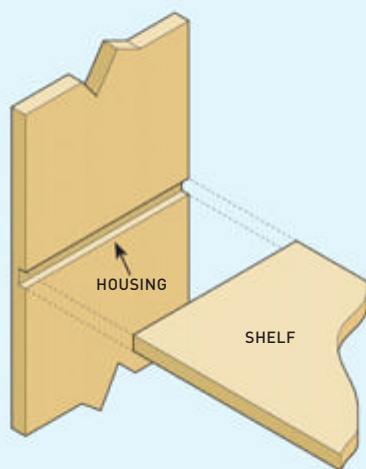
The simplest way to secure the fixed shelf is to use adhesive and screws, but for added strength, or to build a bookcase without adjustable shelves, use one of the methods below.



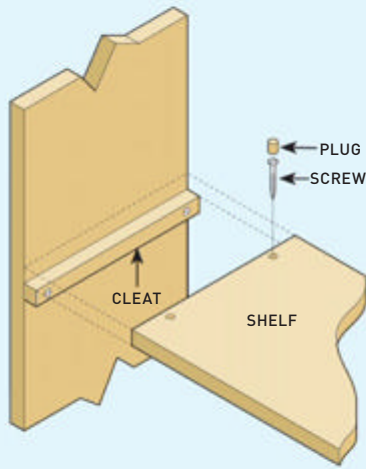
Solid, durable bookcases rely on accurate cutting and construction.

Secure fixed shelves ▼

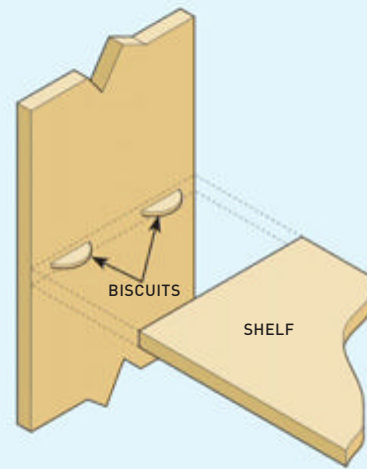
A bookcase should have at least one fixed shelf to add structural strength and rigidity, allowing the remaining shelves to be supported on adjustable shelf pins. The most popular ways to secure them are using a housing joint, a cleat or biscuits.



HOUSING JOINTS utilise a groove cut to one-third the thickness of the timber, generally using a router. This joint is strongest when secured with screws that pull the shelf into the joint, as adhesive does not bond porous end grain as effectively as long-grain surfaces.

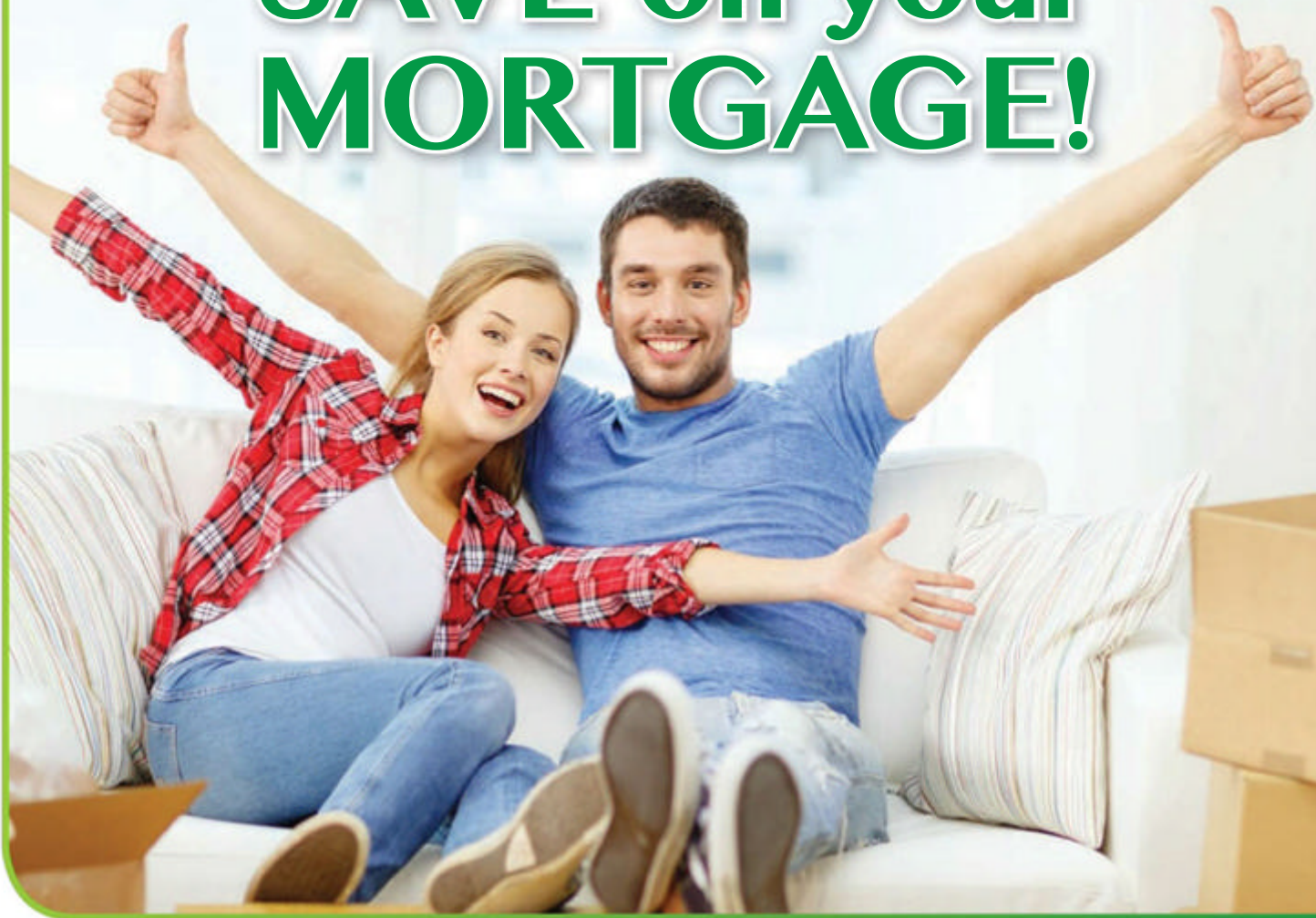


CLEATS WITH SCREWS are strips of timber positioned to support a shelf. Securing cleats to the sides, and often to the shelf, with screws allows for some adjustment and the joint is made stronger using adhesive. **TIP** Effective construction relies on the cleats being cut accurately.



BISCUIT JOINTS are reasonably strong and hide the joinery for a seamless finish. The slots for the biscuits are made using a biscuit joiner, with at least two biscuits at the end of each shelf. **TIP** For a wider shelf, cut more biscuit slots for extra support.

SAVE on your MORTGAGE!



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SUSPENSION SHELVES

Join pine boards with wire rope to make shelving that borrows a design feature from bridge construction

These floating shelves look lightweight, but they are actually very strong and are able to support as much weight as a conventional bookcase.

Wire rope stretches very little under load, allowing the shelves to utilise similar design principles to those used in suspension bridges.

Secured to battens spaced to line up with the wall studs, the shelves are separated by cleats that add strength.

The cleats are attached to the battens using brads and PVA adhesive,

with a single screw and cup washer added to each for a decorative look.

The shelves get narrower as they go up but can also be left the same width. For this project, the front lower edges were chamfered using a router, but they could be left square instead.

Cut the pine components to size using a mitresaw and the wire rope to length with heavy-duty side cutters or linesman's pliers.

Apply two coats of stain and a clear finish to the shelves, battens and cleats before assembly.

Using wire rope

To suspend these shelves, you'll need two lengths of 3.2mm stainless steel balustrade wire, which is readily available from hardware stores.

Balustrade wire can be bought by the metre, and each piece needs to be at least 2100mm long. To be on the safe side, buy 5m of wire.

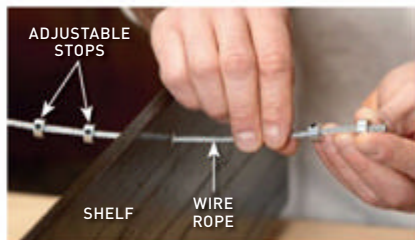
The wire is threaded through the shelf holes, with adjustable stops added to both sides of each shelf to provide support. Leave a tail at the base and cut it off at the end. ➤

Anchoring the wire rope

Thread the wire rope through the shelves, then use a 25mm Forstner bit to make recesses for 20 x 5mm washers and anchor the wire. **TIP** Some adjustable stops have a slot so they can be secured after the wire has been threaded.



1 SECURE the top cleats 5mm from the end of the battens with adhesive and brads. Use a 4mm twist bit to drill a hole for the wire through each cleat and batten at a 45° angle.



2 THREAD the wire rope through the shelf holes, adding adjustable stops for both sides of each shelf as you go. Slide the stops into position against the shelves and secure with an Allen key.



3 ANCHOR the wire by drilling two recesses in each batten behind the angled holes. Loop the wire, secure with a screw and washer, then fill the recesses with epoxy adhesive.

TIME 1 DAY
SKILL INTERMEDIATE

DIY \$318

TOOLS MITRESAW,
DRILL, ROUTER

Materials

Pine	\$119
7 x 7 wire rope	\$14
4mm adjustable stops	\$110
Screws	\$13
8g cup washers	\$3
Flat washers	\$1
Brads	\$2
PVA adhesive	\$5
Epoxy adhesive	\$6
120 grit abrasive paper	\$1
Stain	\$15
Clear finish	\$29
TOTAL	\$318

Eye-catching and easy to build, these wall-hung shelves are a lot stronger than they look.

▼ Make the shelves



1 Prepare the shelves

Use a 4mm twist bit to drill holes for the wire rope through each shelf, 350mm in from the ends and 25mm from the front edge. Apply masking tape to improve the visibility of the setout marks, then position the top shelf on the battens, 279mm in from each end, and secure with brads.



2 Assemble the unit

Secure a pair of cleats to the battens under the top shelf with PVA adhesive and brads, then attach the next shelf to the cleats using brads. Continue attaching cleats to the battens and shelves to the cleats in order, finishing with the base cleats under the last shelf.



3 Reinforce the joints

Turn the shelves over and use a try or combination square to check all joints are 90°. Drill pilot holes to drive screws into the shelves through the battens. Turn the shelves right way up to drive a screw with a cup washer through the centre of each cleat.

TIP Thread the wire before drilling.



4 Mount the shelving

Cut two temporary support blocks from scrap 90 x 45mm timber and position the shelves against the wall. Find the stud locations, mark with tape and drive a screw through the top of one batten into the wall. Check the shelves are level, securing the battens with three screws in each.



5 Tension the cables

Pull the wire rope tight using an offcut of timber as a tensioning lever. Use a torpedo level to check the shelves for level, adjusting as needed. Use an Allen key to tighten the grub screw in each adjustable stop, locking the stops firmly in position above and below each of the shelves.

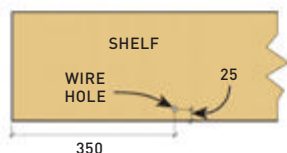
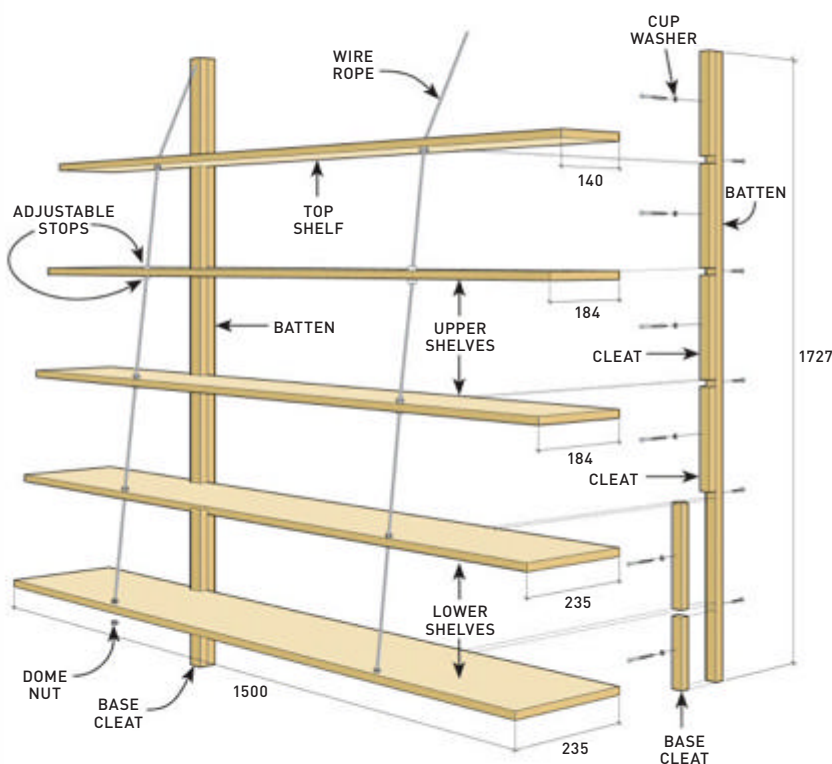


6 Add the dome nuts

Use a pair of heavy-duty side cutters or linesman's pliers to cut the wire rope to length. Leave about 5mm of wire protruding below the adjustable stop under the base shelf, then cap the cut end for safety by attaching a dome nut over it using hot-melt glue or silicone.

Suspension shelves

measurements in mm



CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
Pine		
Top shelf	1500 x 140 x 19	1
Upper shelves	1500 x 184 x 19	2
Lower shelves	1500 x 235 x 19	2
Battens	1727 x 42 x 19	2
Cleats	285 x 30 x 19	10
Base cleats	195 x 30 x 19	2

FASTENERS

TYPE	USE
Brads, 25 x 1.5mm	Cleats
Particleboard screws, 40mm x 8g	Battens
Particleboard screws, 75mm x 8g	Battens
Particleboard screws, 18mm x 8g	Wire rope anchor
Dome nuts, 5mm	Base shelf

without clogging.

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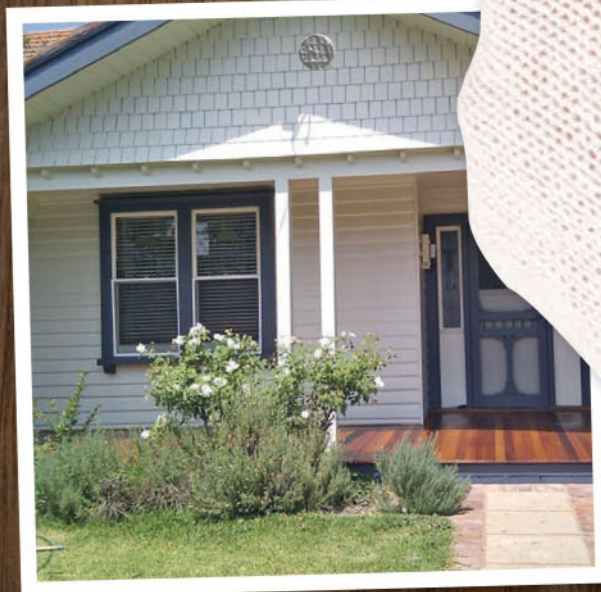


The Home Team



Readers' projects

Be inspired by the work of these DIYers, from building a bed to designing a watertight letterbox



Fold-up workbench

Handyman reader Brent Adcock crafted a foldaway workbench for next to nothing by salvaging all the materials for the project from skip bins on new-home building sites.

He used boards left over from roof construction to build the main frame, with the backing of the bench made from salvaged flooring materials.

The benchtop and doors are framed with roofing batten offcuts, while the plywood used for the doors and work surface were recycled from a discarded packing crate.

For the legs, Brent used dressed all round (DAR) timber that had been concrete formwork in a past life.

Even the offcuts weren't wasted, as he transformed the scraps into a rolling box for storing his power tools.



BRENT



Recycled material was given a new role as an organised workspace.



The workbench folds up when not in use to save space and protect tools.



Wheels make it easy to slide the tool drawer out for use or back in for storage.



Before



After

Removing the rose garden made room for a cubbyhouse and trampoline.

Private playground

Handyman reader Craig Johnson and his wife wanted their children to have a play area in the backyard, so they decided to give up the struggling rose garden to make space.

After removing the fence and digging up the flowers, the couple marked out their plans, which included a sandpit.

The area was levelled, trenches were dug and limestone blocks laid for the walls and sandpit.

Craig hired a compactor and prepared the crushed rock base before laying artificial turf, then lining and filling the pit with sand.

In the back corner of the yard, the couple laid 500mm pavers and covered them with rubber mats to create a safe base for the trampoline.

The playground was finished off with a cubbyhouse, which took nearly a day to assemble.

Craig says that the space is a huge success with the children.

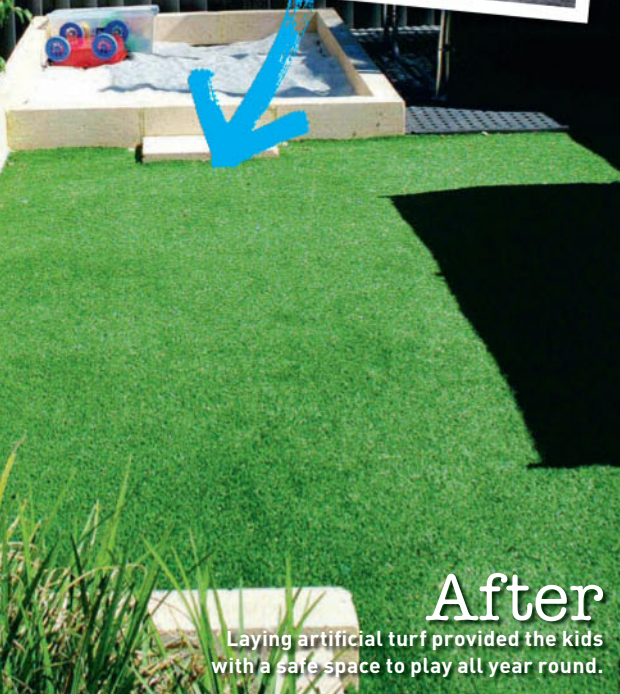
'They love their new area, and it is easy to sit under the pergola next to it and watch them play.' ➤



CRAIG AND HIS KIDS



Before

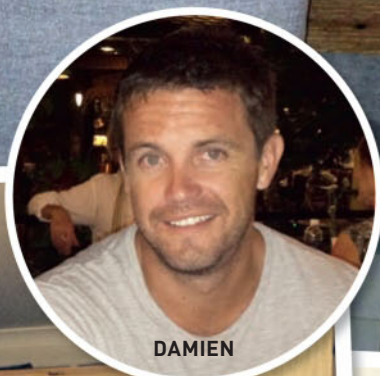


After

Laying artificial turf provided the kids with a safe space to play all year round.



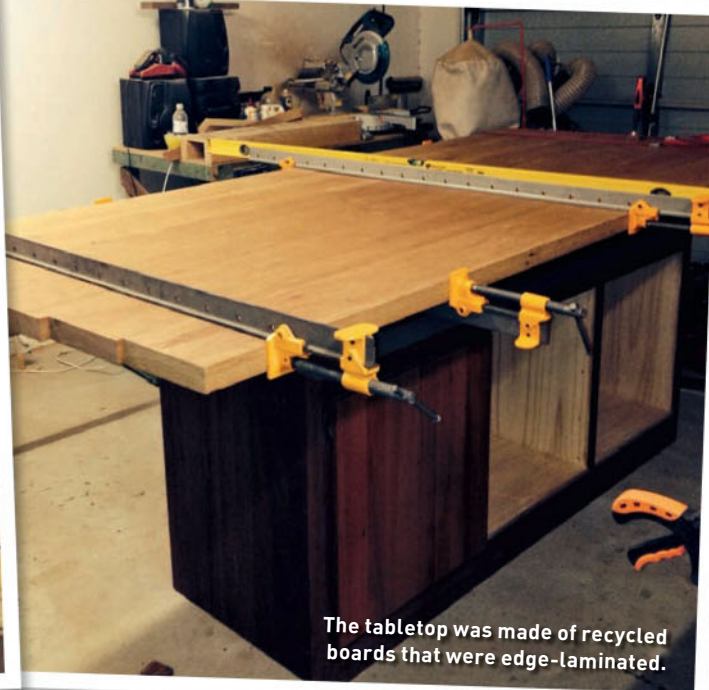
In the dining room, the large table now has pride of place.



DAMIEN



Due to its weight, the frame had to be moved into position separately.



The tabletop was made of recycled boards that were edge-laminated.

Top table

Handyman reader Damien Ryan's girlfriend gave him the difficult task of building her a 10-seater dining table in time for Christmas.

He didn't make the deadline but did deliver a beautiful piece of furniture for future family gatherings.

After consulting with his uncle, who is a cabinet-maker, Damien decided on a design. He then tried to source reclaimed oak but had to settle for a different kind of timber.

'In the end, I went with recycled blackbutt. I'm glad I did, as it was half the price and I surprised myself with the end result,' he says.

Transporting the 200kg of timber back home turned out to be a tricky task and resulted in a permanent bend in the roof rack of the car.

Damien used old power poles to make the table legs and filled any holes or cracks with resin.

Neighbours pitched in to help him with all the heavy lifting and a removable top made it possible to carry the oiled and waxed table inside once it was completed.



Beautifully crafted, the bed has created a demand to build more.

Pallet bed

As his daughter and her partner were unable to find a reasonably priced new bed, *Handyman* reader Graham Schleicher agreed to take on the challenge of building them a king-sized one from scratch.

A fan of recycling timber, he knew old pallets would get the job done.

'Old timber pallets could easily be turned into an appealing bed base and headboard rather than just ending up as waste,' he says.

Graham designed the bed so it could be dismantled and moved around easily, and also perforated the mattress base for ventilation.

The new bed turned out to be such a hit with his daughter, her husband and their friends that he has now been asked to build more. ➤



GRAHAM



Holes were cut in the bed base for ventilation.



An artistic eye spotted the potential of old timber pallets.

Deluxe mailbox

Subscriber Rob Middenway needed a new letterbox that would be watertight in subtropical rainstorms and also big enough to fit his copy of *Handyman*.

He settled on a rectangular design made out of exterior ply, trimmed with offcuts of Tasmanian oak, and featuring a sloping mini orb roof.

A plastic chopping board was used for the floor, with the opening acting as a drain. It was also covered in flywire to keep out creepy-crawlies.

The mail slot is 25mm high and the width of the box, with a 30mm wide sloping aluminium strip at the front to drain water.



Facade facelift

Handyman reader Ross McNeilage had his work cut out for him when he decided to rejuvenate the front patio of his 1920s Californian-style bungalow.

Before repainting, he first needed to replace the wrought iron posts and fix the sagging '60s verandah floor.

Ross propped up the verandah and installed 100mm cypress timber posts. He then rebuilt the floor using tongue and groove boards, concealing the nails for a professional finish.

After sanding, he completed the revival with three coats of decking oil.

**WIN
\$300**

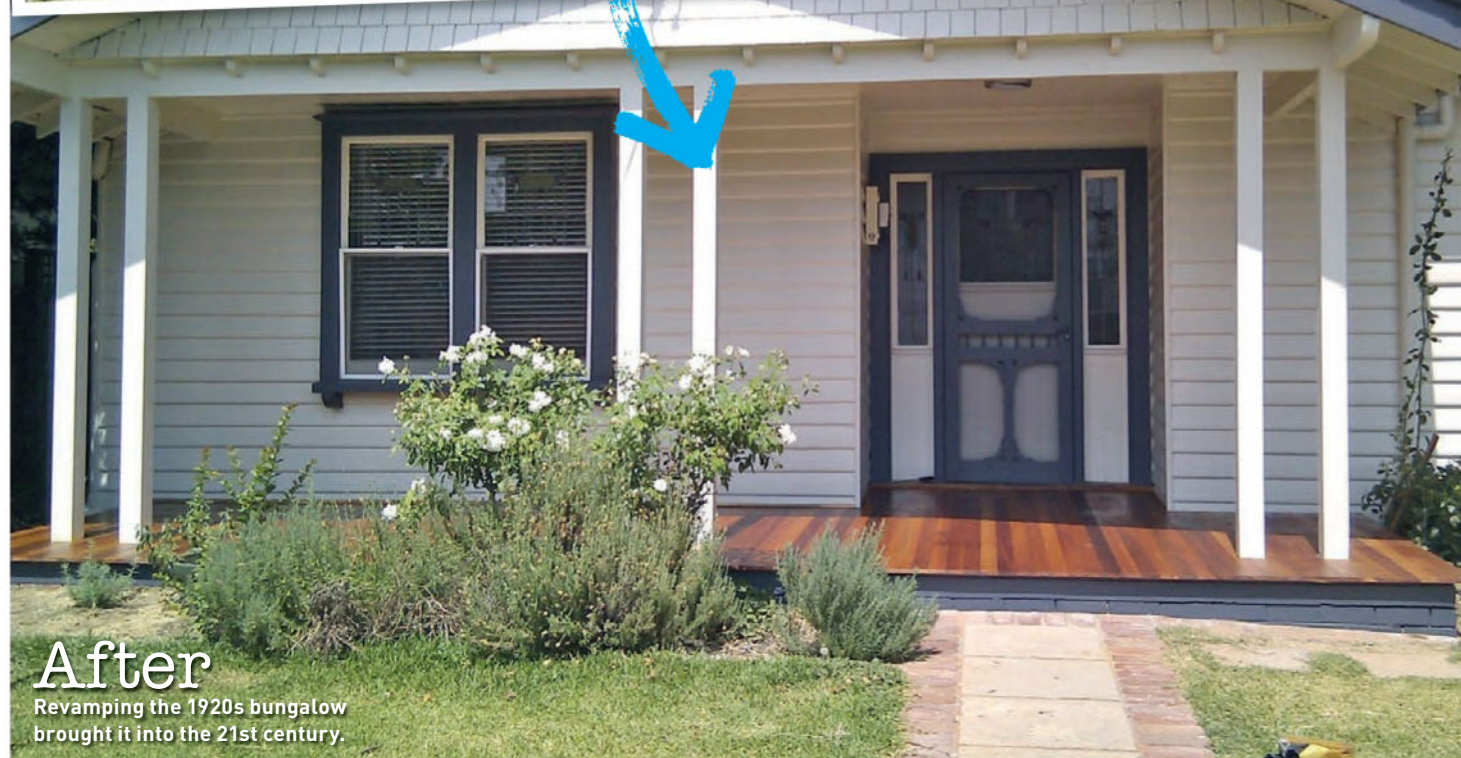
CASH FOR DIY

We love to share what our readers are working on, whether it's building a deck, revamping a room, landscaping the yard or making furniture. No project is too big or too small, and the more unusual the better.

Send us photos of your DIY project for your chance to win \$300 and have it published in *Handyman*. Take high-resolution before and after pics, plus one of yourself, then submit them online at handyman.net.au.



Before



After

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STICK IT in place with Sika Post Fix concrete alternative, \$27, for use with wood, cement, metal or plastic posts.



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Timber planter

Build a self-watering raised bed from treated pine to grow salad greens

Everyone loves to grow fresh salad greens, tomatoes and herbs. But backyard crops need regular water to thrive. Too much or too little can result in problems like rot, wilt and split fruit.

A weekend away can be enough to kill off a thriving vegie patch if there's no-one around to do the watering.

To avoid the problem of withered crops, build these self-watering timber planters and use them to grow edibles.

Not only do they look good, but they also keep animals at bay and you can leave them for weeks on end without having to worry about water.

How they work

These self-watering planters are also called sub-irrigated planters, or SIPS, because they allow the plants to sip water whenever they want.

Built as a box with posts and a floor attached to joists, the timber used is MGP10, F7, H3 treated pine, as it's long lasting for outdoor use in exposed situations above ground.

Cut lengths of 70 x 35mm timber in half using a circular saw and fence guide to make the posts.

When the box is ready, add a pond liner to retain water, then position the socked agricultural pipe and fill with soil mix. The secret to the success of these raised beds lies in the use of the socked agricultural pipe.

Once you fill the agricultural pipe reservoirs, they allow air to circulate and water to wick up to the roots of the plants whenever needed.

Watering plants from below means the roots stay moist and there's less evaporation, so you don't need to water as much.

TIP The clear plastic tube allows any overflow water to drain away. ➤

Garden saver ▼

Here are the top reasons to build a planter box for growing edibles.

- 1 It saves your back and knees.
- 2 You'll have fewer weeds.
- 3 The simple sub-irrigation system saves water.
- 4 Have fresh food year-round.
- 5 You can create the soil mix.
- 6 Crops are safer from animals.
- 7 It can go in a yard or on a deck.



TIME 1 DAY
SKILL INTERMEDIATE

DIY \$359

TOOLS MITRESAW
DRILL, CIRCULAR SAW,
STAPLE GUN

Planting a raised bed

To set up and maintain the raised garden bed, follow these guidelines. And for more great ideas on using sub-irrigated planters (SIPS), visit insideurbangreen.org.

CHOOSE a spot that gets at least six hours of sun each day. If a planter is against a wall, you can get by with less sun because of reflected heat.

LINE the planter with a rubber pond liner to prolong the life of the treated pine and prevent chemicals leaching into the soil.

USE a light, fluffy soil mix that retains moisture without becoming compacted or waterlogged. Improve the soil mix with perlite. It forms spaces so water moves freely through the root system.

MULCH the planters to keep weeds down and slow evaporation.

TIP Perlite is ideal for use in propagation, hydroponics and container gardens.

Brunnings Perlite, \$9 for 5L. brunnings.com.au



▼ Build the planter



1 Build the box ends

Position the end boards on a level workbench, aligning them with the corner to keep the assembly square. Lay three posts across the boards, one on each end and one in the centre, securing each post with two screws into each board.



2 Make the box sides

Position and clamp the side boards on a level workbench, aligning them with the corner to keep the assembly square. Mark the post locations at 600 and 1200mm from one end. Position and secure each post with two screws into each board.



3 Assemble the box

Stand up the ends and sides on a level surface and align the corners, positioning the ends in between the sides. Clamp each corner and measure the diagonals to check for square, then secure the corner posts to the sides using screws.



4 Mark the joists

Cut a timber block to 340mm long to use as a flooring depth guide. Position the block against the side of each post inside the box and mark the top of each joist and floor cleat on the sides of the posts using a carpenter's pencil.



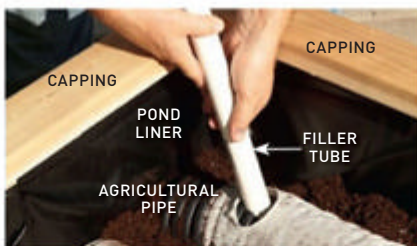
5 Secure the floor

Attach the floor cleats to the end posts then secure the joists to the side posts using screws. Position the floor boards hard against the posts and mark the notches to be cut out with a jigsaw. Lay the flooring and secure to the joists with decking screws.



6 Attach the pond liner

Lay the pond liner inside the box, smoothing it across the floor. Fold the liner neatly at the corners and secure it around the inside top of the box using staples. Trim off any excess liner flush with the top of the box using scissors or a utility knife.



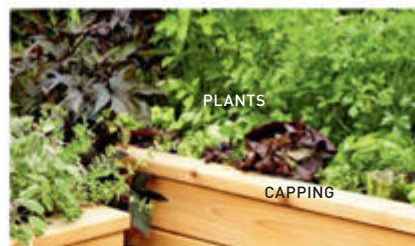
7 Add the agricultural pipe

Secure the capping with screws, then evenly space three lengths of agricultural pipe in the box. Wedge the ends tightly against the box and pack soil mix around the pipes to keep them straight. Cut a hole at one end of an outside pipe for the PVC filler tube.



8 Install the overflow tubing

Drill a 12mm diameter hole in the end of the planter box opposite the filler tube just above the height of the agricultural pipe. Cut a hole in the top of the pipe next to the box hole and position 12mm tubing from the agricultural pipe to the drainage hole.

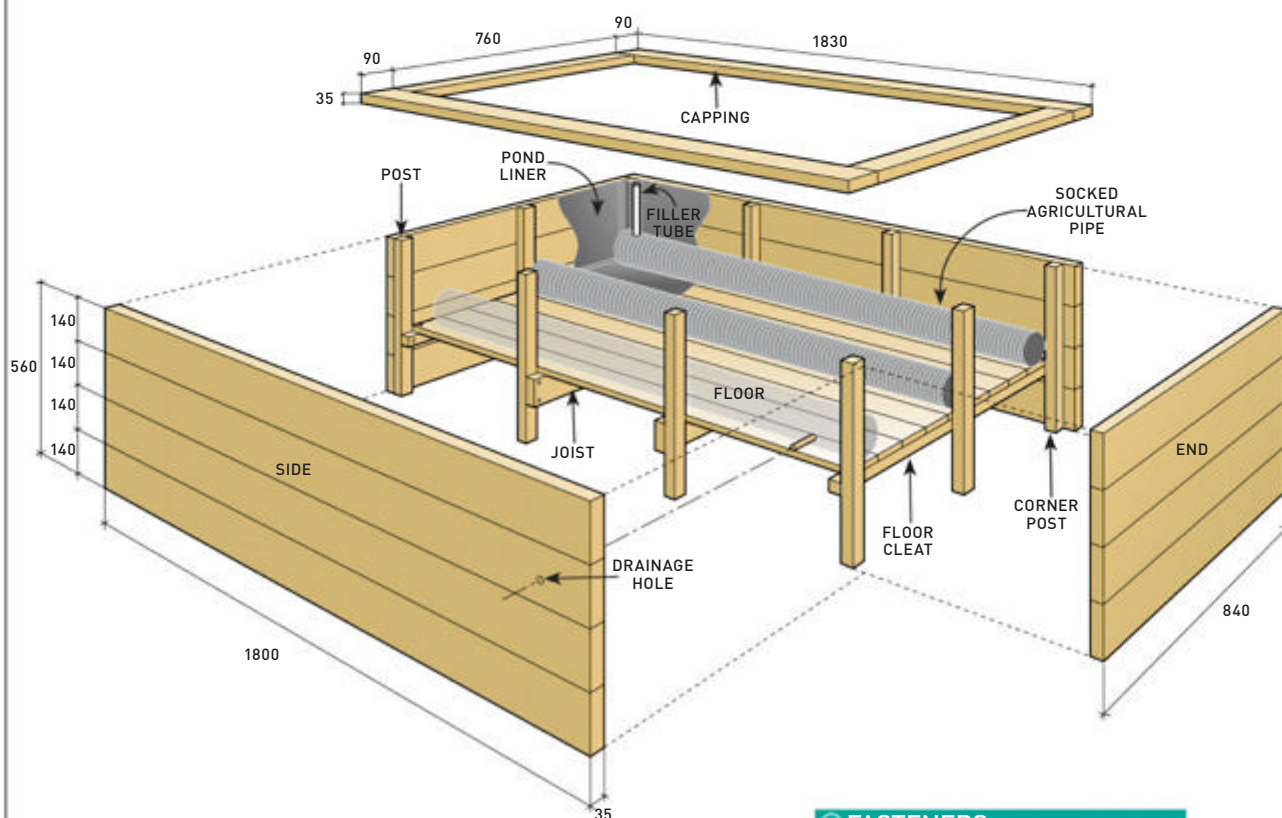


9 Fill with soil and plants

Blend soil in a wheelbarrow to make a lightweight mix. Shovel the soil into the planter, finishing 25mm below the capping, then fill the pipes with water until it overflows. Add the plants and mulch, giving the soil surface an initial water.

Self-watering planter

measurements in mm



FASTENERS

TYPE	USE
Galvanised bugle screws, 50mm x 8g	Posts, joists, floor cleats and capping
Stainless steel decking screws, 40mm x 8g	Decking
Galvanised staples	Pond liner

CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
H3 Treated Pine		
Ends	840 x 140 x 35	8
Sides	1800 x 140 x 35	8
Floor	1720 x 90 x 22	9
End caps	760 x 90 x 35	2
Side caps	1830 x 90 x 35	2
Joists	840 x 90 x 35	2
Floor cleats	840 x 35 x 33	2
Posts	560 x 35 x 33	10

Materials

Treated pine	\$180
Decking	\$50
Stainless steel decking screws	\$25
Galvanised bugle screws	\$8
Socked agricultural pipe	\$37
PVC pipe	\$2
Pond liner	\$40
Plastic tube	\$1
Timber preservative	\$16
TOTAL	\$359

NEW

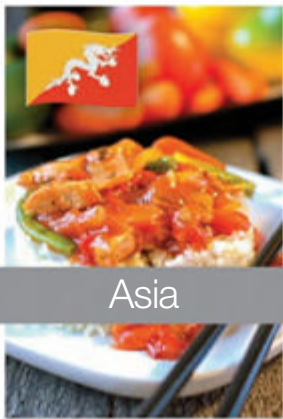
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Mediterranean

Johnsons World Kitchen is a new and unique range of packet seeds comprised of distinctive vegetables and herbs that are essential ingredients in regional cuisines around the world. Cuisines of the Americas, Asia, France, Europe and the Mediterranean are all at your fingertips with these exciting and delicious varieties.

Every pack includes a recipe tip, and with more recipes available on the Johnsons website there's no shortage of exciting cooking ideas!

Johnsons World Kitchen seeds are now available at Bunnings and independent garden centres nationwide.



Prepare beds for winter veg

Harvest the last of the summer crops and get ready to plant cool-weather edibles

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

March is the changeover month when it comes to growing vegetables, so it's time to pick the last of the summer produce and plant the new autumn and winter crops.

A bit of work done in the garden now will ensure you have a good harvest during the cooler months.

Here's how to sow and grow vegies, greens and herbs for fresh ingredients to add to soups, stews and more. ➤

SWISS CHARD
FLAMINGO

LETTUCE
'RAVIT'



1 Harvest the crops

The first job is to pick all of the remaining crops, and either enjoy them now or preserve them for future use. You can make sauce from excess tomatoes, or oven-dry them.



Freeze surplus basil by tearing the leaves, putting them in ice-cube trays and covering with water.

The frozen leaves can be used in winter soups and stews simply by adding the ice-cube to the pot with the other ingredients.

Trim herbs such as oregano and marjoram, then hang the clippings in a warm, dry spot indoors. Store the dried leaves in an airtight container.

2 Prepare the patch

Remove all the finished plants from the vegetable garden and put them on the compost heap.

Pull up any weeds, making sure you get the roots as well.

Weeds compete with plants for soil nutrition and leave them open to attack by insects and diseases.

Dig the whole patch with a fork or spade, incorporating any remaining mulch into the soil.

Break up the clods until you have a nice crumbly soil.



Don't leave any roots behind when you're digging up weeds.



Keep soil in great shape and promote healthy growth with liquid seaweed.

3 Test the soil pH

The majority of vegetables like a soil with a pH of about 6.5. And as soil has a tendency to slowly become acidic through fertilising, it is always a good idea to test it every couple of years.

Checking soil pH is easy with a testing kit. If it is too acidic you can rectify it with dolomite, garden lime or a liquid lime.

Make sure you follow the directions on the packet.



Manutec Soil pH Test Kit, \$16. manutec.com.au



5 Water the bed

Give the bed a good watering at least a day before you plant.

This will help the manure and compost to break down and settle prior to you planting seeds or seedlings.



6 Spread with mulch

Adding a mulch, such as sugar cane, lucerne hay or pea straw, conserves moisture by reducing evaporation, prevents weed growth by restricting light and modifies the temperature of the soil by cooling or warming it.

As the mulch breaks down, it adds structure to the soil by supplying it with beneficial organic matter. ➤

4 Condition the soil

Before planting, the soil will need conditioning with mushroom compost, or cow or chicken manure.

Dig the compost or manure lightly into the soil, then rake it, making sure it is crumbly, level and smooth. It will eventually break down, supplying the soil with beneficial organic matter.

Conditioners also encourage earthworms, which break down root mats and open up tunnels for oxygen and water to penetrate the soil.

The plant roots take nutrition from the nitrate-rich mucus that coats these tunnels.

Compost is free and makes a great conditioner, as it helps to regenerate the soil and increases the water-holding capacity by at least 30% as well.

And by recycling organic waste, you're keeping it out of landfill.

Seaweed products are also soil conditioners.

Often mistaken for a fertiliser, liquid seaweed promotes beneficial micro-organisms in the soil, which in turn boosts the health of the plant.



Garden Basics Seaweed Liquid Concentrate, about \$6 for 750ml, from Bunnings.



Homemade compost is an ideal soil conditioner, and it's free.

What to plant ▼



BETROOT



BROAD BEANS



BROCCOLI



CABBAGE



CARROT



CAULIFLOWER



ENDIVE



KALE



LEEK



LETTUCE



ONION



PEAS



SILVERBEET



SPINACH



TURNIP

Growing in climate zones

Depending on whether you live in a hot or cold region, you need to choose the vegetables that will thrive in local conditions during winter.

■ **COOL AND TEMPERATE AREAS** Radishes, kohlrabi, shallots, spring onions and Brussels sprouts.



■ **SUBTROPICAL AND TROPICAL AREAS** Cucumbers, beans, tomatoes, parsnips, eggplants and capsicums.



Herbs

Plant rosemary, bay, sage, oregano and thyme for winter staples such as soups, stews and casseroles.

Sow seeds of coriander, rocket, mizuna, chervil and parsley. ➤



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#1.2 tonne payload for Single Cab 2WD Genio with standard light truck tyres at 60psi. Max GVM 2980 kgs for all models. Please check your operators manual prior to operation.

*Pricing is valid until 30th June 2015 or while stocks last. Images may show overseas model or illustrate non standard equipment. DMM2925.



You'll save money if you use seeds rather than seedlings.

Seedling punnets can be recycled.

Sow the seeds

There is a greater variety of vegies to choose from if you grow them from seed. It's also less expensive, as a packet of 50-100 seeds costs the same as a punnet of 6-12 seedlings.

If you seal and store the packet, you'll have about three years' supply.

Certain vegetables grow better from seed, planted directly where they are to grow, rather than from transplanted seedlings.

Direct-sow broad beans, radish, silverbeet, peas, Asian greens, spinach, parsnip, beetroot and carrot.

You can buy propagating sets to get your seeds off to a good start,

but an even cheaper alternative is to re-use seedling punnets as a DIY propagator or mini greenhouse.

Place plastic wrap or a clear plastic freezer bag over the seed container, then seal it. Remove the plastic when the seeds have germinated.

Cardboard egg cartons make great punnets for large seeds. Fill them with seed-raising mix and plant a seed in each section. When they've germinated, cut out the individual sections and plant them in the ground.

The cardboard will soon break down in the soil and your seedlings won't suffer transplant shock.

Seed tapes, which are strips of soft paper containing evenly spaced seeds, are easy to use and effective. You simply lay the tape in the ground, cover it with soil, then water it.

TIP Water transplanted seedlings with a seaweed concentrate to help prevent transplant shock.



HomeLeisure Reko Seedling Trays, about \$3 for eight. homeleisure.com.au

DON'T MISS THE NEXT ISSUE OF

Handyman

ON SALE
26 MARCH

Kerb appeal

Add a fence, paint the paving and replant the front garden. We show you how to transform your facade with easy makeovers.

Choosing colours

It can be tricky selecting paint, but we share tips from the pros on how to narrow it down.

PLUS Expert techniques for precision painting.

DIY disasters

When people DIY, they usually get great results, but sometimes hilarious things can happen.

We share some very funny stories of DIY gone wrong.



Plant a herb pot

Turn a terracotta strawberry planter into a miniature edible garden for a patio

Strawberry planters are tall containers with holes around the sides that feature protruding cups to support the plants.

They're ideal for a selection of culinary herbs, as trailing varieties can be planted in the side holes and plants with a more compact habit can be grown in the top of the pot.

But while these tall planters make growing and harvesting herbs easy, water can be distributed unevenly, resulting in some plants drying out and others becoming waterlogged.

To keep herbs in a strawberry pot well hydrated, simply include a central core of fine gravel at planting time to help improve drainage.

What you need

- Strawberry pot
- PVC pipe or cardboard tube
- Vegetable and herb potting mix
- Assorted herbs
- Gravel or small stones
- Liquid seaweed solution



1 Prepare the pot

Position an offcut of PVC pipe or a long cardboard tube in the centre of the strawberry pot. Hold the pipe steady on the base of the pot, then fill around it with potting mix as far as the first planting holes.



2 Plant the herbs

Add trailing varieties to the side holes of the pot, pushing the herbs through from the inside and firming the potting mix around them. Work your way up, adding plants and potting mix until you reach the top.



3 Add the gravel

Fill the pipe with gravel to the level of the potting mix, then ease out the pipe, leaving the core of gravel behind. Make planting holes to add herbs to the top of the pot, watering in well with seaweed solution.



Trailing varieties like oregano and thyme are great for tiered herb pots.



Do now

- **PLANT** sweet pea seeds on St Patrick's Day for beautiful spring blooms, page 122.
- **GROW** Asian greens for winter stir-fries with fresh homegrown flavour, page 124.
- **KEEP** the garden weed-free with these tried and tested techniques, page 128.

This month

Prepare the garden for autumn and make the most of the summer's end

Flowers to sow

Plant seeds for a display of late winter and early spring colour.

- **AQUILEGIA**
- **CINERARIA**
- **POLYANTHUS**
- **PRIMULA**
- **WALLFLOWER**



Vegies to grow

Start sowing for soup and stew crops from the end of autumn.

- **CABBAGES**
- **RADISHES**
- **SPRING ONIONS**
- **SHALLOTS**
- **TURNIPS**



Top pick

If you're looking for a geranium to bring a burst of colour to the garden in even the highest temperatures, *Pelargonium x hortorum* 'Fantasia' is simply unbeatable when it comes to vigour and heat tolerance.

Blooming throughout summer and early autumn in some areas, 'Fantasia' grows up to 36cm high, spreads to 30cm and shows excellent uniformity throughout the entire season.

Featuring huge and colourful semi-double blooms with dark-green foliage, this landscape gem performs equally well in beds or pots.

Give it a position in full sun in well-drained soil and water lightly so the soil doesn't become soggy. Feed when in bloom and deadhead regularly.

'Fantasia' comes in striking solid shades and bicolours, including White, Salmon, Dark Red, Strawberry Sizzle, Purple Sizzle and Raspberry Twizzle.

Book club



The new book from healthy living guru Lee Holmes *Eat Clean, Green and Vegetarian* (Murdoch Books, \$35) will inspire you to get stuck into creating an edible garden and overhauling your diet.

More than just a collection of recipes, this beautifully put together book contains everything you need to know to turn your eating habits around, plus buy local and organic food.

Featuring an easy-to-follow chart on essential vitamins and minerals, a breakdown of Lee's top 10 supercharged veggies and a guide to what's in season, it makes eating green super easy. ➤



PURPLE SIZZLE

To-do list

Here are a few jobs to be getting on with this month.

- ✓ **PLANT** citrus trees in all zones except cold areas.
- ✓ **SPRAY** fruit trees to guard against pests and diseases.
- ✓ **LIFT** and dry onions from late summer onwards.
- ✓ **DIG** new beds and borders to prepare for autumn planting.
- ✓ **SOW** seeds of Aussie natives like wattles and banksias.
- ✓ **REPOT** indoor plants and hanging baskets. ➤

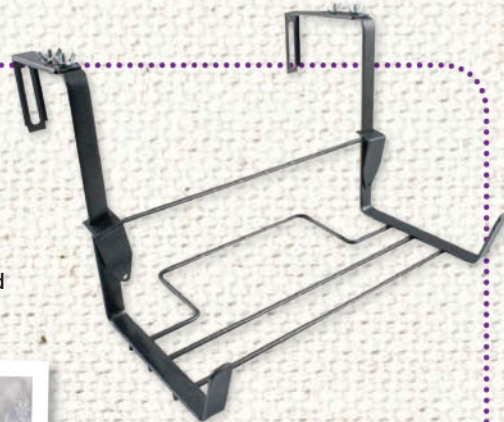
Window boxes

A fantastic way to colour up your place is to display seasonal blooms year-round in window boxes.

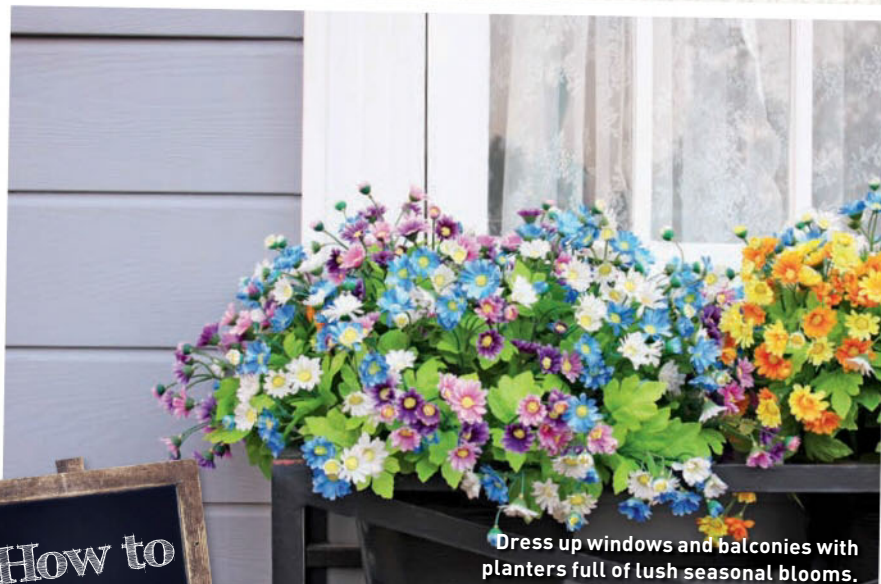
They are a great alternative to garden beds where space is limited, and need less maintenance

than hanging baskets but provide even more visual impact.

Instead of drilling holes in the frames for brackets, use hangers that hook over the windowsill to hold the planters securely in position.



Whites Deluxe Adjustable Window Box Holder, \$20. whitesgroup.com.au



How to

Dress up windows and balconies with planters full of lush seasonal blooms.

Prune and train climbers

Cut back rampant growth on vigorous climbers after flowering and tie in new stems before growth slows down. **TIP** Prune wisteria regularly.



1 Tie the stems

Space out the main stems evenly and at an angle from the vertical. Secure to the support using soft twine tied in a figure of eight.



2 Cut the stems

Trim wayward stems to just above a leaf joint. Take semi-ripe cuttings for propagation from climbers like bougainvillea and mandevilla.

Feed now

Give grass a boost for good autumn growth to see it through winter.

- GARDENIA
- HIBISCUS
- CITRUS
- LAWNS
- ROSES



Prune now

Cut back plants after flowering and summer fruit trees after harvesting.

- WESTRINGIA
- PENSTEMON
- PEACH TREE
- FUCHSIA
- SALVIA



Harvest now

Pick summer and autumn fruits off vines and trees.

- CUCUMBERS
- WATERMELONS
- GRAPES
- PUMPKINS
- NECTARINES



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Fragrant favourites

Plant these old-fashioned blooms now to enjoy their delicate charm and beautiful perfume in spring

WORDS AND MAIN PICTURE CHERYL MADDOCKS

The sweet pea (*Lathyrus odoratus*) first arrived in England from Sicily in 1699 and has been bred continuously since then.

In the language of flowers, the sweet pea symbolises blissful or delicate pleasure, which arises from the tradition of giving posies as gifts.

The sweet pea was so popular in the early 1900s that it became the symbol of Edwardian England.

Over the centuries, hundreds of cultivars have poured onto the market. While there are fewer cultivars today, the old-fashioned sweet pea will always be available.

It also has a proud place in the history of science, as it was one of the main plants used by Gregor Mendel (1822-84) in experiments that led to the development of his genetic theory.

While there is more to the sweet pea than its looks and perfume, not all varieties are fragrant, so check the packet before purchasing.

In the garden

Most sweet pea cultivars reach 2-3m in height and they need support in the form of a tripod, wire mesh fence or trellis. Dwarf cultivars are available for pots, window boxes or garden beds.

■ **SOW** seeds directly where they are to grow in damp soil. Don't keep seeds overly wet during the germination period, as overwatering is the most common cause of seed failure.

■ **WATER** every couple of days after the seedlings have emerged.

■ **POSITION** in a sunny spot that is sheltered from strong winds.

■ **SOIL** should be full of organic matter and well drained. If it's slightly acidic, apply dolomite or lime.

■ **MULCH** around seedlings with lucerne hay or sugar cane.

■ **FEED** as the flowers start developing with a complete soluble fertiliser.

■ **PICK** the flowers frequently, as sweet peas are similar to pansies in that the more you pick, the more you get.

You can also grow tall cultivars in a large pot supported by a tripod.

To grow sweet peas in containers, use a quality potting mix. Position 2m high bamboo stakes about 50mm apart and 100mm from the edge of the pot, leaving enough room to plant the seeds or seedlings.

Draw them together at the top and tie with string, then plant one sweet pea at the base of each stake.



PICTURE (TOP) THINKSTOCK



For a spectacular sweet pea show next spring, sow the seeds now.

Sowing the seeds

Traditionally, sweet peas were sown on 17 March, which is St Patrick's Day, when the Irish somehow found time to plant them during their celebrations.

It was claimed that sweet peas sown on that day produced larger, more fragrant blooms.

But don't fret if you miss the date, as they can be sown until the end of autumn.

You can sow seeds in spring in cold areas, but buy seeds now while they are readily available.



Mr Fothergill's
Mammoth Mixed Sweet Pea,
about \$4. mrfothergills.com.au



Grow Asian greens

Create a stir with homegrown leafy vegies full of exotic flavour

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

From Thai and Chinese to Vietnamese and Malaysian, Australians love Asian food.

Whether we're whipping up a stir-fry or going out for sushi or yum cha, we just can't get enough.

And the good news for Asian food buffs is that the greens they love to eat, like bok choy, tatsoi and Chinese broccoli or cabbage, are easy to grow.

Plant seeds now and you'll have an organic stir-fry garden in weeks. If space is limited, you can also grow them in pots in a sunny position.

The flowers of all Asian greens are edible and make pretty garnishes.

Not only are they easy to grow, fast to crop and tasty, these greens are good for your health. Rich in folate, vitamins C and K, betacarotene, potassium, magnesium and calcium, they're also low in kilojoules.

Asian greens belong to the Brassicaceae family, along with broccoli, Brussels sprouts and kale.

All members of this plant family, according to considerable research, are reputed to prevent cancer and are potentially anti-inflammatory.

TIP Grow Mr Fothergill's Sprouts Alive! Asian Greens Mix to add to oriental-style salads. ➤



Branch out and create your own stir-fry garden at home.

PICTURE THINKSTOCK



Spring onions

One of the most indispensable stir-fry ingredients, spring onions are easily grown in a sunny spot from seeds or seedlings, in pots and garden beds.

They self-sow easily, so let one of them go to seed to get more plants for free.



Johnsons Patio Vegetables Spring Onion Performer Seeds, \$4.
johnsons-seeds.com.au

What to grow ▼

**BOK CHOY**

A fast-growing Asian green with tender and crunchy pale green or white stalks, bok choy is also called Chinese white cabbage and pak choi. Pick it while young or wait about six weeks for it to mature. **USE** in noodle dishes, soups and stir-fries. Add young leaves to salads or steam whole and serve with oyster sauce and sesame oil.

**TATSOI**

The deep-green leaves of tatsoi, or Chinese flat green cabbage, have a slightly nutty flavour. To pick continuously, remove the outside leaves from the rosette separately. **USE** the young leaves in salads to add crunch. Steam the leaves and stalks and season with soy sauce and garlic. Lightly cook in stir-fries or add to soups at the last moment.

**CHOI SUM**

This popular Asian green, also called choi-san and Chinese soup green, has large leaves and delicate tasting stems. Harvest while young or allow it to mature. You can eat the entire plant, including the small yellow flowers. **USE** the stems and leaves in soups. Steam and serve as a side dish or add it to stir-fries.

**CHINESE BROCCOLI**

Known as Chinese kale, kai lan and gai lan, this green produces much smaller flower rosettes than the common broccoli. It is harvested about nine weeks after sowing, just before the flowers start to open. **USE** the whole plant, including the stem, leaves and flowers. Add to stir-fries, or steam and serve with soy sauce and fried garlic as a side.

**CHINESE CABBAGE**

Also called wong bok and nappa cabbage, this variety forms a densely packed head of fine textured and crinkly leaves that are blanched in the centre. There are varieties that are ready for harvest in 10 weeks. **USE** its sweet, delicate tasting leaves as a wrap or base for steaming fish, in coleslaw and Asian salads, or add at the end to soups and stir-fries.

**MUSTARD GREENS**

Mizuna, or Japanese mustard, is a milder-flavoured variety while mibuna is slightly stronger. The large-leafed red mustard is hot, especially the older leaves. Treat them as a cut-and-come-again crop, picking the outer leaves first. **USE** the young leaves to give tang to Asian salads. Put barbecued fish on a bed of raw mustard leaves.



Fast-growing greens like Chinese broccoli crop in just two months.

Sowing seeds

Asian greens grow very easily from seed and transplanted seedlings will often bolt to seed.

■ **SOW** seeds directly where they are to grow.

Choose a position that gets 5-6 hours of sun a day and seedlings will appear in just a few days.

If you sow the seeds too thickly, the seedlings can be thinned and the young leaves used in salad mixes.

■ **SOIL** should be free draining and enriched with manure or compost before planting.

■ **WATER** daily to keep the plants growing quickly and to prevent them bolting to seed.

■ **MULCH** the soil with lucerne hay or pea straw to help retain moisture.

■ **FEED** weekly with a soluble plant food when the seedlings have reached about 100mm high.

■ **HARVEST** while the plants are young. Most Asian greens reach their full size in about eight weeks.

■ **CHECK** for caterpillars of the cabbage white butterfly, as they eat the leaves.

Use an organic spray insecticide like Eco-Neem (ecoorganicgarden.com.au) or sprinkle Derris Dust on the foliage to deal with the caterpillars.

Snails and slugs will also munch on Asian greens, so use beer traps or environmentally friendly snail bait.

PowerFeed Organic Plant Food,
\$13 for 1L. seasol.com.au



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Bunnings Garden Centre**



An international weed, water hyacinth infests aquatic systems on every continent.

PICTURE GETTY IMAGES

PRICKLY
PEAR

Weed attack

Check what can stay and what must go before you pull up plants

WORDS MONICA NYE

One of the least favourite but essential chores that must be performed regularly in the garden would have to be weeding.

Because they are often attractive, easy-to-grow plants that thrive, weeds can quickly become invasive and destroy other less rigorous plants if they are left unchecked.

Weeds Australia has produced a national watchlist of plants that should be avoided in your garden at all costs (weeds.org.au/wons).

If allowed to take root and spread, they quickly turn the backyard into an unkempt mess.

Manager of the government's National Weeds Strategy Project John Thorp, says, 'Weeds are any plants growing out of place, such as on paths, in lawns or in a home garden, that a person wishes to control.' ➤

JOHN
THORP

State of origin ▼

Location is key in weed warfare, as species that are classified as a dangerous weed in a particular state or territory may be seen as a welcome garden plant in another.

'Australia is affected in most places by weeds, but they change because we go from the tropics to temperate climates,' says John.

'What may be an indoor plant in Tasmania could easily be considered a weed in the tropics.

'You also get subtropical vines which scramble over canopies.

'They're a problem, especially up the Macleay River area in New South Wales where they really damage the bushland,' says John.



Camphor laurels are beautiful trees but present a problem in bushland areas of northern NSW.

Garden invaders

There are 32 weeds listed by the federal government as having national significance. Many, including the most common one, lantana, are referred to as garden escapes.

'That is, they've literally escaped from the garden,' explains John.

'Birds typically spread the plants by picking up the seeds and flying over the neighbour's place, dropping a few along the way and eventually heading into bushland.'

'The culprits include a range of black birds like the currawongs, which are frugivores.'

Some of the most common backyard plants that turn into weeds this way include the fast-growing asparagus weed, which the birds prey on for their berries.

Other widespread garden weeds are brooms, which come in different coloured varieties but are most common with yellow flowers. All types of broom, regardless of colour, are prolific seed producers.

Cat's claw creeper, Madeira vine and cacti are also garden weeds.

'Cacti are a major problem if you are in a dry place,' says John.

'Australia was overrun at one time with a type of cactus, the prickly pear. The opuntoid cacti are a whole group of plants that could easily invade entire dry parts of Australia.'

Plant right ▼

To ensure the plants that are stocked are not dangerous to the environment, every Bunnings store has a Greenlife Buyer.

National Greenlife Buyer David Hardie says, 'One of the key selection criteria is suitability for local climate and conditions.'

'Our team also works closely with regulators to ensure we are always stocking the right plants.'

'Bunnings is committed to not selling environmental weeds that

may have a negative impact on the natural environment.'

David adds there are now more non- or less-invasive plant cultivars than in the past and recommends the state and territory plant guide at growmeinstead.com.au.

To control weeds, there is a wide range of herbicides and weedmats available instore. Mulching is a good way to prevent them occurring in the first place, as is cutting spent flowerheads from plants.



This less-invasive form of agapanthus is sold at Bunnings.

PICTURE (MAIN) ALAMY



Purple-flowered Paterson's curse is a blight in southern parts of Australia.

CAT'S CLAW
CREEPER

Disposal methods

Once a plant becomes a concern, it needs to be eradicated completely by preventing seeding and reproduction.

'But the real problem with weeds spreading and propagating isn't the birds, it is humans incorrectly disposing of garden waste,' says John.

'Many people dump waste in the bush or recycle clippings as mulch thinking they're being green, but it's really just spreading weeds further.'

'The correct disposal method for a large amount of material is using an enclosed system like a skip bin, or taking the waste to the tip,

making sure that it is tied down securely in a trailer.

'Otherwise, use the green bin and dispose of clippings, weeds and other waste material through your normal rubbish removal service.'

John also gives the big thumbs down to the backyard burn-off.

'It is illegal in many parts of Australia, especially in summer, and the heat from a burn-off opens seeds so they can germinate. Weed residue can also be carried in the smoke.'

Weeds are also a major problem in waterways, as they damage and pollute delicate aqua ecosystems. ➤



Lantana forms dense, impenetrable thickets that invade bushland.



A major threat to our waterways, willow trees produce seeds in just a few weeks.

Water invaders

'Athel pine is a shade tree which people use in arid lands,' says John.

'It becomes weedy and, like the water hyacinth, which was once an attractive pond plant with its blue flowers, it invades major watercourses.

'They are presently trying to control 600km of it in the Finke River, which is the largest dry river in the world, running from above Alice Springs to below the South Australian border.



Pulling up weeds

The Sydney Weeds Committee offers advice on how to weed manually (sydneyweeds.org.au).

Always wear gloves and use a hand trowel to remove the entire root so the plant can't resprout from any remaining root system.

RAKE background mulch.

INSERT the trowel and carefully loosen the soil around the roots.

PULL the plant free, grasping it by the stems or the leaves while freeing the roots with the trowel.

REMOVE the plant and shake off the excess soil.

REPLACE the disturbed soil and any ground mulch.

Place the entire plant or any part capable of reproducing, such as tubers, rhizomes, berries, seeds or other propagules in a bag and remove from the site.

Other debris material can be mulched on site.

'These trees are often found in recreation areas, caravan parks and the banks of rivers,' says John.

Many of the 100 willow tree varieties pose a double threat as they grow on both land and water.

'Willows have a very short seed life, from two to six weeks, and this very brief propagation period means they can cross-pollinate and produce seed rapidly, so they're now threatening our waterways.'

Growth season

The vigour of a weed's growth depends on which time of year the rainfall occurs. For most of southern Australia, this would be in spring and for the tropical north in summer.

Regardless of location, rainfall and season, once any type of weed takes hold, it's hard work getting rid of it.

'If you are going to successfully keep weeds down, you can never take the pressure off, as it requires dedicated persistence to keep them under control,' says John.



Nine national weeds ▼



ASPARAGUS WEED



BLACKBERRY



BROOM



LANTANA



MIMOSA



PARTHENIUM WEED



SALVINIA



WATER HYACINTH



WILLOW

Find it at Bunnings

DIY designer pots

Transform plain outdoor plant pots with a stencil design in terracotta paint

It's easy to add personality to pots with a painted design. Terracotta paint is water-based and is actually made of real clay, so it withstands the weather, retaining its painted shape without bleeding.

Create your own stencil and use it to customise pots.

Once the paint is dry, simply fill the pots with soil and plant up.



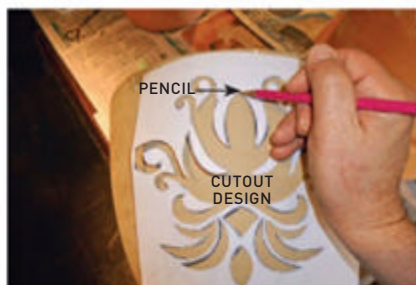
Megatreat Liquid Terracotta Paving Paint, \$12.58 for 350ml.

What you need

- Outdoor pot
- Paintbrush
- Terracotta paint
- Craft knife
- Pencil



1 Make the stencil
Choose and print a design, then use a photocopier to enlarge or reduce it to the desired size. Position the paper on a cutting mat and cut out the design using a craft knife.



2 Transfer the design
Attach the paper stencil to the pot with tape and trace the design onto the surface with a pencil, holding it tightly by hand when tracing the curved edges for a clean line.



3 Paint the pot
Apply terracotta paint to the marked design on the pot using a small paintbrush, making sure to get a clean edge. Let it dry for two hours, then apply a second coat.

What's on this March

Adult D.I.Y. Workshops

Saturday 28 February Windows and doors	Sunday 15 March D.I.Y. projects
Sunday 1 March Windows and doors	Saturday 21 March Gardening
Saturday 7 March Outdoor project	Sunday 22 March Gardening
Sunday 8 March International Women's Day	Saturday 28 March Painting and plastering
Saturday 14 March D.I.Y. projects	Sunday 29 March Painting and plastering

Our workshops are held every weekend at 11am, 12.30pm and 2pm. For specific topics, ask instore or go to bunnings.com.au. If you live in South Australia, speak to a team member or visit bunnings.com.au for details about our great one-on-one D.I.Y. workshops. These workshops run from 10am to 4pm each Saturday and Sunday.

Kids' D.I.Y. Workshops

Saturday 28 February Dress-ups	Sunday 22 March Grow your own
Sunday 1 March Craft	Saturday 28 March Fun with paint
Saturday 7 March Nature	Sunday 29 March Decorator
Sunday 8 March Woodwork	
Saturday 14 March Garden creatures	
Sunday 15 March St Patrick's Day	
Saturday 21 March Garden craft	

For more information on other instore events or to book, call (03) 8831 9777 or visit bunnings.com.au

BUNNINGS
warehouse

5

extraordinary
uses for bananas**Attract birds**

Put an overripe banana on a raised platform in the garden, punching a few holes in it to make it accessible to butterflies as well as birds. Remove it at night so you don't attract possums.

Polish leaves

Are the leaves on your indoor plants looking dull or dusty? Wipe down each leaf with the inside of a banana peel to remove the surface dust and replace it with a clean, lustrous shine.

Deter aphids

If aphids attack your roses, bury dried or cut-up banana peels a few centimetres deep around the base of the plant and they'll soon leave. Don't use whole peels as possums will dig them up.

Add to compost

With their high content of potassium and phosphorus, whole bananas and peels are welcome additions to a compost pile. The fruit breaks down especially fast in hot weather.

Feed plants

Bananas are rich in potassium, an important garden nutrient. Dry the peels on screens in winter, grind them up in early spring and use as mulch for new plants, or cut into pieces and use as food.



A CUT ABOVE

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RYOBI ONE+ tool system starts with the powerful new
Lithium+ battery, now with up to 4 times the run time.



MODERN STARTS WITH CORINTHIAN

THE DECO COLLECTION

When entering a room the first thing you see is the door. So when designing your modern home, inspiration starts with Corinthian. The Deco Collection uses clean lines and geometry to open up a world of modern design for your home. When Georgia Ezra, of G.A.B.B.E Interior Design, is tasked with creating a stylish, modern room, she starts with Corinthian. Watch Georgia styling an interior at Corinthian.com.au

"First impressions start at the entrance to a room, so let the door lead your interior design."

GEORGIA EZRA, G.A.B.B.E INTERIOR DESIGN



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